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A MARRIAGE

IN HIGH LIFE.

EDITED BY

THE AUTHORESS OF 'FLIRTATION.'

"I was compelled to *her*—but I love *thee*
By love's own sweet constraint."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MARRIAGE IN HIGH LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Now, in his turn, offended and surprised,
The knight in silence from her side withdrew;
With pain she marked it, but her pain disguised,
And heedless seemed her journey to pursue,
Nor backward deigned to him one anxious view,
As oft she wished.

PSYCHE.

EASTER was now fast approaching, and Fitzhenry announced to Emmeline his intention of going out of town for a fortnight,—but not to Arlingford—And he concluded by saying, that, of course, he

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supposed she would like to pass the time with her father at Charlton.

At any other time, and under any other circumstances, how gladly would she have availed herself of the opportunity of returning to her former, peaceful, happy home! But, like a sick person, her feverish mind had for some time past dwelt on Arlingford. She longed to find herself again there, for there, they *must* meet—there they *might* be alone! and she could not help hoping for some explanation between them, which might make her, at least, less miserable. Fitzhenry's manner towards her had of late changed: it had no longer the ease of indifference, the coldness of mere civility; but, alas! it had only changed to apparent dislike, or at least displeasure. He observed her

more; but his observations seemed always to prejudice him still more against her.

And yet, what could she do? or what leave undone? She had tried all means to please him, and all had failed. She first had followed the dictates of her own heart, and then, relying on Pelham's knowledge of her husband's character, and on his advice, she had played a part most unnatural to her—that of a gay, unfeeling woman of the world, when her heart was breaking. All, in turn, seemed to be wrong.

For an instant, a horrid thought had crossed her mind. Could Pelham be deceiving her? Could he, for any view, either of his own, or Fitzhenry's, be endeavouring to draw her on to what was lowering her still more in her husband's

opinion? Was Pelham untrue to his friend? or what would be still worse, was it a concerted plan, to exasperate her, and at last to force her to break a connexion, which, to her husband, had become intolerable thraldom. Emmeline, shuddering, turned away from such thoughts, almost reproaching herself for ingratitude in having, even for a moment, entertained them. But again disappointed in what she had looked to with some degree of satisfaction, and finding she must relinquish even those faint hopes which she had built, on their return to Arlingford, her sick mind preyed on itself, and conjured up these painful surmises, producing doubt and suspicion in the most confiding of all characters.

Emmeline heard Fitzhenry's notification about leaving town in silent acqui-

escence; and, having no choice, to Charlton she went; but her heart sunk within her as she drove up to her father's door, for, aware of how much she was changed, she dreaded her parents' observation, and feared, that when constantly in their society, she could not keep up those false spirits which she always endeavoured to assume when with them. Poor Emmeline was in truth sadly changed. Instead of the active, cheerful being she used to be, she was now generally abstracted, and sometimes even apparently totally insensible to every thing around her; and then, when fearful of betraying herself, she at others suddenly broke forth into those unnatural bursts of feverish spirits, so painful to witness, because so evidently proceeding from internal suffering.

Mrs. Benson watched her in silent anxiety; but her loss of bloom, of activity, and appetite, even of spirits, all was attributed to a far different cause; and, after some enquiries respecting her health, which Emmeline always evaded, the warm-hearted mother, not without smiling at her daughter's overstrained shyness and delicacy, questioned her no more on the subject; but contented herself with paying every possible attention to her bodily comfort, while she indulged in the delightful anticipation of new objects for her maternal pride and fondness.

And thus deceived as to the cause of Emmeline's altered appearance, she spared her any more embarrassing conversations.

The stated fortnight was past, and

still she did not receive from Fitzhenry the promised letter, announcing his return to town. But one day the servant put into her hand one with the Arlingford post-mark. It was not franked by Fitzhenry; the writing was unknown to her; and, in alarm, she hastily broke the seal.

She found it was from Brown, the housekeeper, informing her that Reynolds had been seized with a violent and dangerous illness; that the doctors, who attended him, gave little hope of his recovery; and that he so constantly expressed his anxiety to see her, and Lord Fitzhenry, that she could not help complying with his request, and informing her ladyship of his situation and wishes. She added—"I have also taken the liberty to write to my lord; and not knowing where his lordship is,

have sent the letter to the steward in town to forward to him."

Emmeline knew but too well whither the letter would follow him; but thinking he might not receive it in time, or that, possibly, in the society he then was, he might be little inclined to attend such a summons, she determined immediately to go to Arlingford. How much the desire of being there, of visiting every spot, every inanimate object in her mind connected with Fitzhenry, and the possibility even of thus meeting him, might have influenced her benevolent decision —probably she herself did not know.

On arriving at Arlingford, Emmeline's first question was, whether Lord Fitzhenry was there: and the feeling of deep disappointment with which she learnt that he was not, and that he was not

even expected, betraying to herself her real object in coming, made her half-ashamed when at length she enquired after the poor invalid.

The accounts of Reynolds's situation had been in no way exaggerated. He was still alive, and sensible; but there was no possibility whatever of recovery. Emmeline therefore endeavoured to overcome her own selfish feelings, and went immediately to the sick room.

Independent of the gratification she received from witnessing the pleasure which her presence seemed to give to the faithful old servant, the duty she undertook then was one every way better suited to her present state of mind, than the dissipation in which she had been lately engaged. It soothed and quieted the tu-

mult of her feelings, and brought back to her mind some of the innocent, calm remembrances of happier days. Educated by her mother in the exercise of every religious duty, she, who had so lately been seen glittering in ball rooms, now knelt by the bed of sickness; and while raising the dying man's mind and hopes to that better world to which he was hastening, she found herself strengthened to bear the sorrows of that, in which she was still appointed to suffer.

Towards the end of the second day after Emmeline's arrival at Arlingford, Reynolds grew rapidly worse; the symptoms of death seemed to be fast increasing, and, aware of his approaching dissolution, his anxiety for Fitzhenry's arrival, and the nervous perturbation of

his mind, were painful to witness. Emmeline frequently asked if he had any request to make, any wish she could communicate to him; but his only answer was, that he must see him before he died.

To compose, and turn his thoughts to other things, Emmeline had again recourse to religion; and, when thus employed, and while the last rays of the evening sun shone faintly through the curtains of the sick room on her kneeling figure, and on the sacred book she held in her hand, the door of the apartment slowly opened, and Fitzhenry appeared.

He started back on seeing Emmeline, and, for a moment, stood still, as if awed by the scene before him; but Reynolds recognizing him, and exclaiming—"'Tis him! God be praised, I shall now die in

peace," Fitzhenry hastened up to him, kindly taking his extended hand; then again looking at Emmeline—"Good God! Lady Fitzhenry, since when have you been here?"

"Only a day or two; I was sent for," said Emmeline, hardly knowing whether thus unexpectedly seeing her had given him pain or pleasure.

"I was so bold as to send for her ladyship," said Reynolds. "It was my request, my dying request. I knew I had not long to live. I knew I should not die easy, unless I could once more see you, once more see that angel!" and still grasping Fitzhenry with one hand, he held out the other to Emmeline.

At such a moment, not to comply with any wish of the sick man, was impos-

sible; though, half fearful of his intention, she tremblingly put her hand in his.

"Dear, dear Lord Fitzhenry," continued Reynolds, "you know I love you as if you were my own son. Death makes us all equal, and it makes me bold. I have often wished, longed, to speak to you, but felt it was not my place; and I had not courage; but listen to a dying man's advice. I know all—you know I do. Oh, my dear master! repent, and turn from your evil ways! Do not any longer trifle with God, and with the happiness he has offered you! Do not cast from you the angel Heaven has sent you!"—and he joined their hands. "God of heaven!" he continued, with a trembling

voice, "look down on these, thy servants, and make them happy together!"

Fitzhenry's head fell on the bed, as if wishing to avoid the eyes of Emmeline, as he involuntarily sunk on his knees.

As for Emmeline, overcome and terrified at what had passed; fearful as to the manner in which Fitzhenry might interpret such a seemingly premeditated appeal to his feelings in her behalf; perhaps, even, humbled at the situation in which it placed her, she hastily, almost unconsciously, withdrew her hand from the feeble grasp of the dying man, while his dimmed eyes were still raised to heaven; and, before either he, or her husband, had time to discover her intention, she hastily left the room.

But she had no sooner quitted it than

she repented her hasty flight. When Reynolds joined their hands, although Fitzhenry had not clasped hers in token of affection, still he had suffered his to remain with it; and, overcome by the old man's address to him, he had appeared to have given way to the kind—the virtuous impulse of the moment. That impulse, and those virtuous feelings, might possibly have produced a favourable explanation; and she, by leaving him so abruptly, had now, she feared, evidently shown a reluctance to any thing which might have produced a reconciliation between them.

Twice she had her hand on the lock to return; but, timid from excess of affection, each time her courage failed her. The door which she had scarcely closed, reopened of itself, and she heard these words uttered by Fitzhenry: "It

is impossible—indeed it can't be so;—but depend upon it, nothing shall be wanting on my part to contribute to her happiness, and——"

Emmeline waited for no more. As one pursued by a horrid vision, she hurried to her own room. The shades of evening deepened around her, as, alone and half stupified with her various feelings, she counted the striking of the heavy hours as they passed. Not a sound was to be heard in the uninhabited house—no one came near her.

At length, when the clock slowly, solemnly sounded twelve, she started up, and, recollecting that her maid was probably waiting for her, she rung the bell, that she might dismiss her for the night; but she first sent her to enquire after Reynolds, whose room was in a

distant part of the building. On the return of Jenkins, the report she brought was—" That my lord was still with Reynolds—that they were apparently engaged in serious conversation—for that no one was allowed to go into the room, my lord himself giving him the necessary medicines, and having dismissed the nurse."

After her maid had taken off Emmeline's gown, unplaited her hair, and, at her desire, lit the fire in her dressing-room, as she fancied it would be a sort of companion to her, which, in her present state of mind, she felt to be necessary, she sent Jenkins to bed, and, drawing her chair close upon the hearth, Emmeline remained lost in reflections neither cheering nor soothing. The near neighbourhood of a death-bed gives an awful feeling

even to one in the full pride of youth and health. To be aware that so close to us a fellow-creature is probably just then passing, through the agonies of death, to that eternity to which we all look with awe, is an overpowering sensation; and Emmeline shuddered as these thoughts crossed her mind. She cast her eyes fearfully round the room, and endeavoured to brighten the flame in the grate. Still death and its horrors hung over her imagination, which wandered now to future scenes of pain and punishment; and the thought that Fitzhenry—her loved Fitzhenry, who had wound himself round every fibre of her heart—might perhaps be an outcast from that heaven to which she had been taught to look, as the end and aim ofh er existence,was agony. For she could not con-

ceal from herself that he was living in bold defiance, or rather in total disregard and indifference to the will and laws of his God.

Emmeline's blood curdled, and a cold shiver crept all over her frame. Instinctively she sunk on her knees, and prayed for him who had never been taught to pray for himself. Her head sank on her clasped hands, which rested on a chair beside her; her long hair falling over her face and shoulders. The dead silence that surrounded her, appalled her awe-stricken mind; she eagerly listened for some sound of human existence and neighbourhood; but nothing was to be heard but the regular vibration of the great clock in the hall. Emmeline remained kneeling, till her nervous agitation grew so

painfully strong, that she hardly dared to move, and had not power to shake off the superstitious horror which had taken possession of her. Every limb trembled; the cold sweat stood on her forehead; and it was an inexpressible relief to her disordered mind, when, at length, she heard a slow step in the gallery, and a gentle knock at her door. She concluded it was her maid, bringing her some tidings of Reynolds, and she quickly and joyfully bade her enter. The door softly opened, and Fitzhenry appeared.

An unearthly vision could scarcely have startled Emmeline more. She uttered an exclamation, almost of terror, as she hastily rose from her knees; but almost directly sank into the chair be-

side her, her trembling limbs refusing to support her.

"I think you gave me leave to come in," said Fitzhenry, still standing at the door. Emmeline bowed assent, when, closing it after him, he came up to her, and put his candle on the mantle-piece.

It was the first time he had ever entered her room since that day when, on her parents' first arrival at Arlingford, he had conducted them to it; and, dreading the possible purport of his visit *now*, after the scene that had lately occurred, she had not courage to say a word. For a minute, both were silent—at length Fitzhenry said—

"I thought you would be anxious to hear about poor Reynolds; and as he has now sunk into something like sleep,

I came away for a minute to tell you he is more easy and composed; but I fear this stupor is only the forerunner of death, and that all will soon be over. I shall lose a most faithful servant—indeed, an attached friend—."

He paused; but Emmeline, still too nervous to speak, said nothing.

"I also came," said he, in an agitated, hurried manner, "to thank you for your kindness in coming to him: it was most kind—good—excellent;—like yourself. I feel it deeply, I assure you, as well as Reynolds."

These few words of praise, so unlike what she had expected from him after what had passed, still more overpowered Emmeline. Had she dared to give way to the feelings of the moment, she would

have thrown herself into her husband's arms, and, in his tenderness, claimed a reward for an action which he seemed to take as a kindness to himself. But alas! not for one moment could she be deceived as to the nature of *his* feelings; not for one moment, after the decisive declaration which she had again heard him make, could she attribute his present manner towards her to any thing but mere gratitude for her attentions to his old servant; and, repressing the throbbings of her bosom, and scarcely knowing what she said, with a breathless voice she answered:

"I came to Arlingford because I thought Brown's letter might not reach you in time, and I did not know where to write to you—I mean, I thought you might be otherwise engaged yourself."—

And then struck with the appearance of coldness and reproof in her words, and the possible interpretation to be given to them, she stopped short.

Fitzhenry made no comment. Both were now standing seemingly occupied with watching the dying embers of the fire—at last he turned towards her, she felt his eyes were on her.

"Poor Reynolds often names you," he said; "but I think, unless you wish it– perhaps you had better not go to him again—such scenes are painful, and——"

He was continuing, but with the quick touchiness of love, (of unrequited love, which interprets every thing to its disadvantage,) Emmeline, catching at those words, and fancying they alluded to what had lately passed, and were meant as a

hint to her to avoid any possible recurrence of the same scene, immediately, with a voice scarcely audible from agitation, said:

"Oh no, certainly. And perhaps now that you are here, and that my presence is no longer desired—I mean not necessary—it may be more convenient if I return to Charlton———or to town."

"Just whatever you prefer," said Fitzhenry, coldly; and, after a moment's pause, "you know my wish is, that you should always do whatever you like and judge to be best." And he put up his hand to take his candle, as if in preparation to leave the room.

Poor Emmeline had, in a moment of perhaps excusable irritation, artfully made the proposal of leaving Arlingford,

in the hope of its being opposed; and this cold acquiescence quite overcame her. She could not speak, for her lips quivered when she attempted it; and, depressed and nervous with all that had passed, big tears again rolled down her cheeks, and she kept her head averted to conceal them from Fitzhenry.

In raising his hand to take his candle, he somehow had caught on the button of his coat-sleeve a lock of her long hair, which was hanging loose over her shoulders; and, during the pause that followed his answer, he was endeavouring to disentangle himself; but in vain. Surprised at his still remaining near her, and in silence, she at last looked up, and seeing what had happened, her trembling hands darted on the entangled hair, and

with the vehemence of vexation, she broke and untwisted it till she again set him free. He looked at her for a minute in seeming astonishment, and then, coldly wishing her good-night, left the room.

He had scarcely been gone a minute, when recalling the kindness of his manner on first entering, and blaming herself for the irritation she had given way to, she determined to recall him; and, passing from one extreme to another, and buoyed up with instant hope—though she scarcely knew of what—she hastily collected her hair with a comb, folded her wrapper closer around her, and opening her door, hurried into the gallery. All there was dark and silent; she turned towards Fitzhenry's room—his door was open—but he was gone! Stopping a

minute to listen and take breath, she heard him crossing the hall below on his way to Reynolds's apartment. She determined to recall him, and hurried along the gallery to the head of the stairs for that purpose. When she got there, she saw the last faint ray of the light he was carrying glimmering across the hall. Twice she endeavoured to pronounce his name—but it was a name that never could be pronounced by her calmly. She was frightened at the sound of her own voice, faint as its accents were, (so faint that they never reached him to whom they were addressed,) and her courage totally failed her.

"Alas!" thought she, as she sadly leant against the bannisters for support, "if he came, what could I say to him?

what have I to ask of him, but pity for feelings which he can neither understand nor return? and may I at least never so far forget myself. I am humbled enough already." And now, even alarmed at what those feelings had so nearly betrayed her into, she returned to her own room as hastily as she had a minute before quitted it; so capricious, so inconsistent does passion render its victims.

Towards dawn of day, Emmeline, whose heavy eyes sleep had never visited, heard a bustle below; several doors were hastily opened and shut. In a little time, Fitzhenry (for she could never mistake *his* step) passed hastily along the gallery to his own room, and closed the door immediately after him. Then there was again a dead silence.

"It is all over," thought Emmeline; "Reynolds is at peace: the only being in this house who loved me is gone!" A cold shiver crept over her; she buried her tear-bedewed face in her pillow, and thus lay for long immoveable, no conscious thought passing through her agitated mind.

When her maid came to her in the morning, she informed her Reynolds had died about five o'clock; that Lord Fitzhenry had never left him; that he had supported him in his arms to the last, and, when all was over, appearing much affected, he had gone immediately to his own room, giving orders that no one was to go to him till he rung.

Jenkins, unbidden, brought Emmeline her breakfast in her own apartment, al-

though at Arlingford that was a meal at which she and Fitzhenry had always hitherto met. How painfully did she then feel the separation between them! Fitzhenry was in sorrow, and she, his wife, dared not go near him; even the servants seemed to dictate to her her conduct, and to be aware of her situation.

As to her departure, she knew not what to determine. She had said she would go. Her husband had not opposed her declared intention, and she did not like again to be accused of caprice. Not feeling, however, that she could leave Arlingford without at least again seeing him, she put off her journey till the following day.

To pass the slow unoccupied hours, Emmeline, knowing there was no chance

of seeing Fitzhenry for some time, wandered out. The country was now in its first freshness of beauty—all smiled around her. Those rides and paths which, the summer before, she had first seen, with Fitzhenry at her side, were again clothed in the lovely green of spring. Often at those spots, connected in her mind with some circumstance, word, or even look of Fitzhenry, which a few months back had, although in delusion, made her heart sometimes beat with the flattering hope that she was not quite indifferent to him, poor Emmeline would remain fixed, quite unconscious of the time she thus passed in vague reverie. For, compared with what she had endured in London, there was a sort of pleasure in her present state of mind, raised and soothed as it had been, by the

late pious duties in which she had been engaged, and softened by the charm of renovated nature. How often does some accidental sound or perfume, wafted to us on a spring breeze, startle the mind by confused recollections of hours gone by, and by undefinable sensations of mixed pain and pleasure!

Emmeline had not been long returned to the house before a servant came and told her that dinner was ready, and that my lord was waiting for her. Their meeting was rather awkward on both sides. Fitzhenry never raised his eyes upon her; but she was now well used to that sort of cold neglect on his part. It was the first time for several months that they had been *tête-à-tête*. This circumstance, and the room they were in, all

brought back forcibly to Emmeline's mind their wedding-day; that day of exultation and joy to her parents, and at its dawn of hope and happiness even to herself—and how had it all ended!

To one formed for tenderness, for all the social charities of life, there could not be a more cheerless fate than hers; for, repulsed from where her heart should have found its best home, she was even denied the consolations of confidential friendship. Occupied with these thoughts, Emmeline was little inclined to join in uninteresting, forced conversation. Fitzhenry, too, seemed much depressed, and they eat their repast in nearly total silence.

When it was ended, Fitzhenry, under the plea of having several orders to give,

and many things to arrange in consequence of the death of Reynolds, soon returned to his own room, and Emmeline passed the remainder of the evening alone. On the approach of midnight, as he never appeared, she concluded that Fitzhenry did not intend to return; she therefore rang for her candle, and left the drawing-room; but before she reached her own apartment, she was met in the gallery by her husband—they both stopped.

"I shall leave this place to-morrow," said Emmeline, in a low voice. "Have you any letters or orders to send by me?" She still fondly hoped he would make some objection to her departure; but he merely replied, that he concluded she was going to Grosvenor Street; that he would follow in a few days; and that if

she did not set out early, he would send some letters by her.

"I can go at any hour," said Emmeline, "I am in no hurry; it does not signify at what time I go; all hours are the same to me." And so they parted.

It was in the same cold, distant manner that they separated next morning, when Emmeline left Arlingford for town. For though she loitered on, always hoping Fitzhenry would let fall some word at which she might catch as an encouragement to stay, he never in any manner opposed her departure; and at last, with a heavy heart, she entered her carriage, and, after a melancholy, solitary journey, drove over London's noisy pavement, now glazed by a burning May sun, into Grosvenor Street.

Those who have lived in London when melancholy circumstances have excluded them from participating in its amusements, will enter into Emmeline's feelings when, during the first, and on many an ensuing dismal evening, which she spent alone, she heard the carriages hurry past her door in the constant bustle of pleasure. Often, as she sat in the dusk of the now long-protracted spring evenings, Emmeline was only roused from some deep reverie to a consciousness of the lateness of the hour, by the glare of the lamps and flambeaux of some of these gay equipages passing her darkened windows, and hastening to some general resort of diversion.

For it was now the high tide, the carnival of London. Every one was there—

and every one went every where—hurrying and crowding after each other, although caring for no one. What a wretched, humiliating picture of human nature does London present during the months of May, June, and July! Affection, friendship, all the social virtues, and charities, disappear before folly, dissipation, and selfishness. And so infectious is the disease, that almost the best hearts are, at least for the moment, tainted; the steadiest heads turned. It is a constant hurry, a perpetual bustle, in which no one has leisure to care, or feel for another, whatever may be the inclination; and scarcely is there time to drop a tear over the grave of a friend. If an uncle, cousin, or some such near relation, is so inconsiderate as to choose these interesting,

busy moments to depart this life, it is looked upon as an almost unpardonable act of selfishness on the part of the defunct, by which so much time, perhaps many entertainments and balls, are lost to his surviving family. On the other hand, the demise of some mere nightly companion in the resorts of dissipation is generally hailed with joy, not for their own demerits, but that not only *their* opera-box and ticket at Almacks, but that of all those nearly connected with them will thereby become disposable; a short retirement being considered necessary both to dry their tears, and give time to a fashionable tailor or mantua-maker to send home the becoming mourning, in which they can again sally forth to make up for the time they have lost, by returning with renovated

spirits to their dissipated duties. In the mean time, anxious notes fly about town as soon as the death is announced in the papers; and the doors of all the patronesses of fashion are beset by the dear friends of the deceased, anxious to be the first to apply for the vacated subscription, which happily can neither be carried away from this world by the selfish, nor be disposed of by will by the obliging.

And this was the world into which poor Emmeline had to carry a breaking heart!

After Fitzhenry had joined her in town, although nothing further had ever passed,—no dispute, no difference had taken place,—yet, they appeared mutually to consider themselves as more than ever, in short, totally estranged.

Both looked miserable: an additional shade of melancholy seemed to have gathered on Lord Fitzhenry's countenance; and yet Emmeline was now certain that her rival was again in town, and that he passed with Lady Florence those hours which she now spent alone in Grosvenor Street. For Emmeline felt it impossible to return to her former life; and, as there was no reason why she should, no one for whom she was called upon to make the exertion, she gave up what had already injured her health, both of mind and body.

Emmeline's temper even was not what it used to be; often, if Fitzhenry accidentally spoke to her, she answered him with asperity, and then the minute he had disappeared, she wept bitterly for

her fault—for her offence towards love ; longing for his return, that, on her knees, she might implore his forgiveness. Yet, when they again met, it was the same repulsive coldness on both sides.

But if there can ever be an excuse for one gifted by nature with the blessing of a mild, gentle disposition, for giving way to irritation, Emmeline might plead it. Her heart was every way wounded ; even Pelham she now dreaded ; Mrs. Osterley's hints eternally haunted her : if she caught his eye fixed upon her in anxious interest, her sick fancy took alarm, and the deep crimson in her cheeks betrayed apprehensions, which she wished to conceal even from herself.

Tormented with this idea, she now

shunned his society and conversation, as much as she had formerly sought it; for, although her extreme diffidence with regard to her own attractions, (a diffidence which her husband's disregard of her had much increased,) her unsuspecting innocence, and simplicity of heart, would rather have led her to prize than avoid the attentions of an agreeable man, regardless of their raising suspicions in the breast of others, any more than in her own; yet, now being aware of what the world *could* and *did* say, that very innocence and simplicity made her fly from the least appearance of evil. She was not one of those to play off on a husband the arts of infidelity, in order, by jealousy, to rouse his feelings, and by the fear of wounded

honour, to attract his attentions towards her.

Fitzhenry cared not for her; but the vow of constancy which her lips had pronounced at the altar, and which was since engraven by strong affection on her heart, was too sacred in her estimation to allow even the uninterested world to suspect that she trifled with it.

Her intercourse with Pelham being thus embittered, and her parents being the last to whom she could reveal her sorrows, she dragged on, in wretched solitude of heart, a listless, useless, aimless existence. The young, the gay, and the busy meantime bustled around her, careless of her unhappiness; or, if they sometimes observed its melancholy symptoms on her pale cheek, or in her

heavy, absent eye, they only wondered "what could make Lady Fitzhenry so discontented, when she possessed every thing in the world to render her happy."

It is thus we too often pass harsh and hasty judgment on those whose grave or suffering countenances chance to cross us in the paths of pleasure, checking, for a minute, by their sad and therefore unwelcome presence, our feeling of enjoyment, in reminding us, most disagreeably, of its transient nature.

CHAPTER II.

Poured in soft dalliance at a lady's feet,
In fondest rapture he appeared to lie . . . .
Their words she heard not—words had ne'er exprest
What well her sickening fancy could supply—
All that their silent eloquence confest
As breathed the sigh of fire from each impassioned
breast.
While thus she gazed, her quivering lips turn pale,
Contending passions rage within her breast,
Nor ever had she known such bitter bale,
Or felt by such fierce agony opprest.

PSYCHE.

EMMELINE having a general invitation to the house of Lady Mowbray—one of her new acquaintance, who was *at-home* on a stated day every week; and never

having yet been to any of her *soirées*, she one evening exerted herself to pay her a visit. There were not many people assembled, owing to the *many things to be done*, a phrase in the fashionable slang of London, expressive of that delightful prospect of busy pleasure, which consists in passing the greatest part of the night in a carriage, fighting in and out of a dozen houses, the owners of which are, perhaps, never seen by their visitors.

Among the few whom these many pleasures had that evening spared to Lady Mowbray, Emmeline found none with whom she was much acquainted; so that after having remained what she thought a sufficient time, hearing a loud knock, announcing a fresh reinforcement

of company, and thinking she had performed her duty of civility, she meditated her departure, when the door opened, and Lady Florence Mostyn was announced.

At that name, Emmeline started so violently, that her neighbour turned round to see what had alarmed her; but could neither perceive any cause for her agitation, nor receive any answer to her enquires, whether she was well, for Emmeline's eyes, thoughts, and every sense, were fixed on her rival.

Lady Florence, after speaking to one or two other people, went up to Lady Mowbray, and seated herself by her, luckily at some distance from where Emmeline was placed. Lady Florence was past the first bloom and beauty of youth; but this was more apparent in

the somewhat thickened contour of her figure, than in her face. Her deep blue eyes were still brilliant; her lovely chisselled mouth still opened to show teeth like pearls, and the roses and lillies still contended in her cheeks. She was simply dressed; but there was not a curl, however careless it appeared, but fell just where it should, and the large shawl in which she was wrapped, took some new graceful fold each time she moved, and by its brilliant colours gave additional effect to the delicate whiteness of a round arm, covered with bracelets. Her voice, and look, were sweetness itself; but in her eyes, an expression lurked, that recalled to the mind, Walter Scott's "Wiley Dame Heron."

Lost in a trance of most painful feelings, Emmeline sat for some time like a statue, without power to form any resolution, as to whether she would fly or face her enemy. *There* was the being who reigned paramount in her husband's heart! Those were the eyes on which he gazed with fondness! on that hand he had sworn constancy! on those lips he had sealed his vows! the silver tones of that voice thrilled to *his* heart, as his did to hers!

Poor Emmeline gazed on all these charms, till, growing frightened at her own increasing agitation, she hastily got up, and moved towards the door.

"My dear Lady Fitzhenry," exclaimed Lady Mowbray, who unfortunately had observed her intended de-

parture, "I hope you are not already going?"

At that name, the eyes of Lady Florence eagerly followed those of the speaker, and rested on Emmeline. And, for an instant, as if impelled by some power they could not resist, the rivals glanced at each other, and their eyes met. But Emmeline's soon fell beneath the scrutiny of her rival, and she turned away her death-like face. The whole expression of Lady Florence's countenance had changed. Emmeline's appearance, every way so different from what she had expected, in an instant roused, within her, feelings she could scarcely command. Her uncontrolled passions were plainly painted in her face; the deep crimson in her cheeks overcame the well applied

rouge; her eyes flashed fire; and the lovely smile on her lips, was replaced by a fearful expression of "envy, hatred, and malice."

Emmeline, scarcely able to support herself, and endeavouring to utter some excuse, still moved towards the door.

"Well, really you are using me very shabbily," said Lady Mowbray, in reply to her uncertain accents, and following her with most officious civility. "But I know this is the moment when it is impossible to keep any body for half an hour; and quiet, sober people, like myself, have no chance of collecting anything like agreeable society. I suppose you are going to the D————e house, or some such gay thing."

Emmeline stammered out, that she was obliged to go home.

" Home! I fear you are not well," retorted Lady Mowbray, now, for the first time, observing her blanched cheek, and bloodless lips. " Do at least wait till you hear that your carriage is ready :" and, cruelly well bred, she rang the bell, enquiring repeatedly whether Emmeline would not be prevailed upon to take something.

Unable to speak, she shook her head in answer, and the instant the welcome sound of her own name reached her ears, she darted out of the room, though still followed by the civilities and offers of the lady of the house.

When in her carriage, and when too late, Emmeline remembered Pelham's

often repeated advice, to endeavour to control, or, at least conceal, her feelings better. She was aware she had humbled herself before her, who, of all people, she would least wish should read those feelings; and she felt also that she had left herself and her husband subjects for animadversion, certainly not of the most charitable nature. But poor Emmeline, in common with all those who allow their affections to controul their judgment, never, till too late, discovered what her conduct should have been—an artlessness of disposition, ill-calculated to contend with a guileful world.

This evening's adventure completely sickened her of the amusements of London; and aware from constant, sad experience, of her inability to perform her

hard part properly, she resolved to avoid in future the possibility of any recurrence of such scenes; for though her mind had long been intent on meeting Lady Florence, from a sort of anxious, jealous curiosity, yet now she felt she could not endure the trial again; and, that weakened both in health and spirits, she was no longer equal to the exertions which she knew she should make. She remained, therefore, in spite of Lady Saville's repeated attacks and railleries, for some time entirely at home; and, catching gladly at an excuse for avoiding even the opera, she gave away her box the following week, to some Hampshire neighbours, who she heard were in town; and the weather being uncommonly hot, she had, on the Saturday, ordered her carriage, after her solitary

dinner, to take a drive out of town, in the hope that a little fresh air might revive and compose her spirits.

But just as she was going, a note arrived from Lady Saville, to say, that she was disappointed of a friend, with whom she was to have gone to the opera, that night, and, who being now unavoidably prevented, had made over the box to her, but her carriage being broken, and having no one to go with, she would be obliged to give up the plan entirely, unless Emmeline would be compassionate and carry her; and she entreated she would overcome her abominable laziness, and agree to the proposal—adding, it was the new opera, and that it would do her good, for she gave herself the blue devils, by moping so much at home.

Too indifferent to every thing, even to

refuse, Emmeline gave up her intended drive, changed her dress, and she and Lady Saville went together to the opera.

About the beginning of the second act, she saw Lady Florence come into a box on the same tier, about ten or twelve off; she was alone—and at that distance, Emmeline thought would probably not recognize her; but, wishing to conceal herself from her view, she made some apology to Lady Saville for being whimsical, and, begging to change places with her, she moved to the opposite seat, drawing the curtain of the box so as entirely to hide herself; although, like the poor bird ensnared by the serpent, she never could withdraw her eyes from her rival.

Before long, a man entered the box

where Lady Florence was; he seated himself directly with his back towards Emmeline; but it was impossible for *her* to mistake him;—the oval head, the brown, curly hair, the attitude and air of the arm that leant on the edge of the box, the action of the hand, all told her but too well it could only be Fitzhenry.

Never before had she beheld them together; never before had she, in a manner, witnessed those words, those looks of love, addressed to Lady Florence, which should now have belonged to her. Though but too well aware of the whole truth, she had as yet suffered merely from a vague, unembodied feeling of jealousy. She had been wounded by neglect; by the mortfying conviction that she was not beloved by her husband; but

had never yet actually witnessed his demonstrations of love to another.

Lady Florence leant towards Fitzhenry, and seemed to whisper something to him. He shook his head, as if contradicting her; but soon after, Emmeline saw him look round towards the box where she was, with a glass, as if in search of some one. She hastily, although she hardly knew why, shrunk back, hiding herself behind the curtain, which she drew still more forward.

They then appeared to be engaged in most earnest conversation for some time, till at length Fitzhenry, leaning back in his chair, sat with his hand over his face, and there seemed to be a total silence between them. Ere long, a third person came into the box. Fitzhenry

then moved from his place, and disappeared.

To those who have known the torments of jealousy, I need not describe Emmeline's feelings; and to those who have not, my expressions would appear exaggerated and unnatural. Like a statue, she sat during the remainder of the opera, not able to attend to any thing around her. Luckily, Lady Saville, who was engaged in a regular flirtation, observed neither her preoccupation, nor additional dejection; and when the curtain fell, Emmeline mechanically followed her companions out of the box. Her complete absence of manner, and Lady Saville's exclusive attention to him, who was whispering soft nothings in her ear, had so effectually driven

away all other visitors, that Emmeline had no one to take charge of her; and Lady Saville and her admirer soon parted from her, the former having found a friend to take her to the usual supper party at Lady L——y's after the opera; and the latter being too gallant, and too much *épris* not to accompany her to the carriage, promising, however, to return to Emmeline. At this minute, however, Pelham, luckily observed her, and forcibly making his way up to her, exclaimed,

"What here! and alone! I thought I saw strangers in your box, so never went near it; how comes it I find you in this desolate situation? Do take my arm."

Emmeline made no reply; and, soon

perceiving that she was more than usually depressed, Pelham, after one two ineffectual efforts, forbore even to speak to her. They made their way towards the door at the top of the great stairs; and, leaving her there, Pelham went to look for her carriage.

Emmeline shrunk behind the door, wrapping herself close up in her cloak, and not daring to raise her eyes from the ground for fear of meeting those of her husband, or of Lady Florence. Her own name, however, pronounced close by her, soon roused her, and she saw Mrs. Osterley coming up to speak to her, accompanied by Mr. Moore.

"My dear Lady Fitzhenry," said she, "what an age it is since I have seen

you! Where have you been hiding yourself? What can you have been about?"

"I have been out of town," replied Emmeline, in a faint voice.

"Oh, yes! I suppose at Easter, of course; but surely you have been returned some weeks; for I have frequently met Lord Fitzhenry: and, by the bye, now I recollect, I heard of you the other evening, at Lady Mowbray's, where I was so unlucky, as just to miss you; and I was sorry to hear you were taken ill there: I hope you are quite recovered."

"Perfectly so," said Emmeline, coldly.

"How did you like our new opera, to-night?" continued Mrs. Osterley. "I thought it inexpressibly dull; yet, in

Paris, I had liked it very much ; what did you think of it ? "

" I ? " said Emmeline, absently, " I really don't know."

" Don't know ? I suppose you mean you have been so agreeably engaged in conversation, that you did not attend," retorted Mrs. Osterley, laughing. " No one comes to the opera for the music in London."

At that minute, Pelham relieved poor Emmeline by saying, that her carriage was driving up, and that they had better be moving down stairs. She willingly took his proffered arm, bowing to Mrs. Osterley, who, before the door had closed upon them, and within Emmeline's hearing, exclaimed, (with a loud laugh to Mr. Moore,) " Well ! that is the best ar-

ranged, best understood affair I ever saw. Lord Fitzhenry and his *chère amie* are just gone down one stair, and Lady Fitzhenry and Pelham are making their escape by the other! and then we English boast of our morality!"

The door closing, prevented Emmeline from hearing more than the burst of applause which followed this remark. Involuntarily she shrunk from Pelham; but he, not aware of any thing that had passed, intent on getting her to the carriage as soon as possible, only pressed her arm the closer, to steady her steps, and hurried her almost forcibly after him.

When they reached the bottom of the stairs, they found an unusual crowd and bustle among the servants; and, by the noise and lashing of whips in the street, there appeared to be great contention

among the coachmen. Pelham, anxious to get Emmeline out of the confusion, still drew her on, persuaded that her carriage must, by that time, be ready. But, when they got outside into the street, he saw that her coachman was engaged in violent contest with another, both endeavouring to drive up their vehicles at the same moment.

The crowd of footmen who had gathered round the interesting spot, encouraging the merciless combatants, was so great, that to retreat was impossible. Pelham could not, among them, distinguish Emmeline's servants; and, amid the din of voices, whips, trampling of hoofs on the pavement, and shivering of breaking lamps, it was vain to attempt to make them hear him.

Emmeline, nervous and frightened at

the uproar around her, forgot for a minute all her former apprehensions, and clung terrified to Pelham; who, to defend her as well as he could, from the unruly mob, put his arm round her. Just then, the horses in her carriage, high-bred, spirited animals, and lately little employed by their mistress, irritated beyond endurance by the lashing of the whip, became ungovernable; they reared up, throwing themselves away from their opponents, and, in the struggle, one of them fell down on the foot-pavement, increasing the confusion.

A loud scream was uttered by a female voice, and, by the rush of link-boys in an instant to the spot, Emmeline beheld Lady Florence Mostyn thrown back on Fitzhenry's breast. The pole of the car-

riage had touched her, but it was the cry of terror more than of pain.

"Stop! on peril of your life, you rascal!" exclaimed a voice, that shot through Emmeline's very soul.

"Whose carriage is that?" demanded Fitzhenry, in an authoritative tone, while still supporting Lady Florence in his arms. There was a sudden silence; the contending coachmen's whips instantly were both quieted. He again repeated his question more loudly than before.

"My lord!" said one of Emmeline's footmen, going up to Fitzhenry, "it is your lordship's carriage."

"*My* carriage!" he exclaimed angrily. "Who ordered it here?"

"We are here with my lady," replied the terrified footman. "Her ladyship is

just getting in—shall I tell her your lordship wishes to be taken home?"

"No, no, you fool!" answered Fitzhenry, in a tone of passion which Emmeline had never before heard from his lips, and which made her shudder; "drive off as fast as you can."

By this time, Pelham had put his charge, more dead than alive, into her carriage, and, not liking to leave her alone in the agitated state she then was, got in after her. Emmeline put out her feeble hand, meaning to prevent him; but, quite overcome, she could not articulate a word; and, no longer able to command herself, she burst into violent hysteric sobs. Totally mistaking her meaning, and interpreting the action into a wish that he should not leave her,

Pelham tenderly seized her hand, desiring the servants to go home as fast as possible. The fallen horse was soon raised. The contending vehicles disengaged, and they drove rapidly off—but followed by cheers and laughter from the more blackguard part of the mob who had witnessed the fray; to which were added personal jokes and remarks, that made Pelham hastily draw up the glasses.

Emmeline still made efforts to speak but Pelham could not distinguish a single word which she endeavoured to articulate; and, only bidding her compose herself, said every thing most kind and soothing, while he again and again pressed her hand in his. When they arrived in Grosvenor-street, he forcibly drew Emmeline's arm within his, to help

her up stairs, and, placing her on a couch, demanded in a low voice, whether she would take any thing, and whether he should send for her maid.

"Oh no, I shall soon recover—make no fuss, I entreat—it is nothing—I have been very foolish—and frightened—that is all. But," added she, with an imploring look, "leave me—for God's sake leave me."

"Not till I see you better, I really cannot." For her bosom still heaved with convulsive sobs, and her heart seemed bursting.

Uncertain what to do, or say, and surprised at her repulsive manner towards him, Pelham walked, disturbed, up and down the room in silence, thinking it best for a little time to leave her to herself. At

length, hastily coming up to her, "My dearest Lady Fitzhenry!" he exclaimed, "allow me to speak to you."

Emmeline started, and looked at him aghast; but without noticing, or even looking at her, Pelham continued in a hurried manner, "I trust you will pardon me for venturing on so sacred a subject,—for touching on sorrows, which you, with such courage, such delicacy, conceal in your own breast—but I know all;—and I know your husband so well, that I am sure I can give you comfort and hope."

Inexpressibly relieved as Emmeline was by these words, which satisfied her that she still had a friend on whom she could rest, yet other feelings for the moment prevailed, and clasping her hands with the vehemence of despair: "Oh, that

is impossible! there is no hope, no happiness for me in this world!"

"On my honour," replied Pelham, with earnestness, "you may trust me; I would not deceive you;" and, sitting down by her, he took her nervously shaking hand in his. A few minutes before, Emmeline would have shrunk from his touch, but those words had been sufficient to banish entirely all her former miserable apprehensions; soothed by hearing once more the consolatory voice of friendship, for an instant she smiled in gratitude on his kind countenance, and then, quite overcome with the variety of her feelings, tears again burst forth, and her head sank on his shoulder.

At that instant, the door was hastily

pushed open, and Fitzhenry appeared! He started on seeing Pelham and Emmeline. As she quickly raised her head at the noise he had made on entering, involuntarily a faint exclamation of dismay escaped her, and even Pelham seemed disconcerted.

"Lady Fitzhenry is not very well;" the latter at length said, after an awkward pause, as if feeling that some explanation of the scene was necessary; "and," added he, addressing himself to Emmeline, "allow me to recommend you to retire to your own room."

Emmeline rose from her seat; every limb shook. Fitzhenry came towards them, fixed his eyes sternly upon her, but said nothing. "I have not been very well lately," she with difficulty

stammered out: "the heat in town does not agree with me; and, I think, I will go to Charlton to-morrow."

Still Fitzhenry spake not, but Emmeline plainly saw anger and contempt written on his countenance: she faintly wished him and Pelham good night. The words died on her lips; for a sad foreboding told her she was taking a final leave of her husband, as she was aware that it was impossible they could any longer continue even on the footing they then were. She paused a minute in hopes Fitzhenry would speak. One word would have brought her to his arms, all forgiven, all forgotten. But he seemed resolved on silence, and Emmeline went on into the inner drawing-room that led to her own apartment.

Pelham perplexed, and uncertain how

to act, followed her with his eyes without moving from the spot she had quitted, while Fitzhenry, in great apparent perturbation, paced the room. At length, just as Emmeline had reached the door of her own apartment, seeing her trembling hands had some difficulty in opening it, Pelham hurried to her assistance.

"You mean then," said he in a low voice, as he turned the lock, "to go to Charlton to-morrow. You shall hear from me, probably see me, and I will bring you good news, perhaps even Fitzhenry;—cheer up, I entreat you, all will yet be well."

Emmeline forced a faint smile, and held out her hand to him; he seized it with affection. "God of heaven bless and support you," he said, with earnestness, and hastily left her.

When he returned to the outward drawing-room, Fitzhenry was gone; he hurried down stairs in hopes of finding him in his own room, but the servants informed him, he had again left the house.

Emmeline ordered her carriage after church next morning, to take her to Charlton; but how great a change do a few hours often make in our views! She already repented having declared her intention of leaving town. Twice, as the hour named by her drew near, she delayed the carriage, wishing (much as she dreaded the interview) to see Fitzhenry before she went. It was now past three, but still he did not appear, and no message came from him. She rang the bell —"Is Lord Fitzhenry gone out?" She enquired, rather fearfully.

"No, my lady," answered the footman; "I believe my lord is not yet up; at least he has not rung his bell; but shall I enquire?"

"Oh! no matter," said Emmeline, with a faltering voice, and dismissing the man. Convinced by this, that it was her husband's intention they should not meet, she determined to write to him; for to part thus, in what seemed a decided, open rupture, without some sort of reconciliation taking place, she now felt to be impossible: she therefore sat down, and took her pen, although not knowing what to say. She once thought she would beg for an interview—demand to be released from her promise of silence, in order to come to some explanation. But yet what had she to say? what had she to learn?

Even if Mrs. Osterley's strange and cruel hints had reached his ears,—if he could so mistake her and his friend, as to give any credit to them, could she flatter herself he was enough interested about her, to care whom she might prefer? On the other hand, to endeavour to exculpate herself from suspicions which he might never have entertained, seemed ridiculous. Besides, could she now, as a new thing, charge him with coldness, dislike, and infidelity—all which he had openly declared, and for all which he had prepared her months before.

Discouraged by these considerations from adverting to what had passed the night before, she at length, after various doubts and indecisions, merely wrote these words :—

"A very few days in the country will, I am sure, quite restore me to my usual health. I will return to Grosvenor Street by the end of the week; but if, for any reasons, you should wish me to come home sooner, I trust to your letting me know, and I shall be most willing to obey your summons. You will find me at my father's.

"EMMELINE FITZHENRY."

This she intended should be given to Fitzhenry after her departure, and she sealed and directed it for the purpose.

The carriage drove up to the door—the servants busied themselves in putting on the luggage, and, hopeless of an interview with Fitzhenry, Emmeline went slowly, sadly, to her own room, to prepare for her departure.

On opening a drawer, she saw the small Geneva watch and chain which Fitzhenry had sent her when a girl. Hardly aware of what she did, she pressed it to her lips—then hung it round her neck. She felt a sad presentiment that she was leaving her husband's roof for ever, and this watch was the only token of kindness she had ever received from him; the only memorial she possessed, except her fatal wedding-ring, placed by him on her hand in reluctance and aversion.

As Emmeline passed back through the drawing-room, she looked mournfully at each object in it, convinced she was beholding them for the last time. She slowly descended the stairs; every limb trembling with nervous apprehension. Again she thought she would en-

deavour to see her husband; and she paused at the door of his room to give herself one more chance; for she thought, perhaps, when he heard her, he would come out to meet her; or if she could only once more catch the sound of his voice, in its usual tone of gentleness and kindness, it would give her courage to demand admittance. But all was still. While thus standing debating with herself, her heart beat so violently, that she could scarcely breathe, and she was forced to lean against the banister for support.

"The chaise is quite ready, my lady," said a footman, coming up to her; for, seeing her on the stairs, he fancied her impatient to set off—"every thing is put in."

With no possible farther excuse for delay, feeling her fate was fixed, she drew down her veil, to conceal her agitation, hurried through the hall, and without allowing herself more time for reflection, got into the carriage.

"To Charlton," said the butler, who had closed the door after her, the servants being already placed in the seat behind, and the postilions immediately drove off.

Emmeline looked back once more at the house from which she felt she was, probably, banishing herself for ever; and then sinking back in the carriage, gave way to her feelings. "Farewell, then, Fitzhenry," she exclaimed, "since such is your will; and may heaven bless you, and have pity on me!"

As she drew near Charlton, she en-

deavoured to compose herself, but in vain: when she looked to the future, all was so dark and hopeless, and she was so strongly impressed with the idea that she should never see Fitzhenry again, that she felt her heart sink within her; and, quite overpowered, and fearful of betraying her secret to her parents, she more than once thought of stopping the carriage. But whither could she go?

Fitzhenry had allowed her to depart. It seemed, indeed, even his wish that she should go; and, unsolicited, she could not return. On they drove. It was a beautiful bright Sunday; every one around her seemed to be enjoying the day in gladness and gratitude. The roads and fields were filled with joyous groups, the air with gay sounds.

"Do I sin in loving him so entirely,

so passionately?" thought Emmeline; "that amid so many that rejoice, I alone am doomed to be miserable?"

In uttering these words, perhaps Emmeline *did sin*. But it is the sin into which suffering betrays us all. The wretched are hidden, or hide themselves, from our view; and when, in sorrow, we look around us, we compare our situation with those only who happen, at that moment, to be basking in the transitory sunshine of cheerfulness. How many, as Emmeline's gay equipage drove rapidly by, probably coveted her riches, her luxuries, her youth, and her beauty! while she envied the ragged, laughing beggar-boy, by the road-side, who, as her carriage passed, tossed his naked arms in the air, hallooing, in pure gaiety of heart and enjoyment of existence.

CHAPTER III.

Has thy heart sickened with deferred hope?
Or felt th' impatient anguish of suspense?
Or hast thou tasted of the bitter cup
Which Disappointment's withered hands dispense?
Thou knowest the poison which o'erflowed from hence
O'er Psyche's tedious, miserable hours.

PSYCHE.

WHEN Emmeline arrived at her father's, the servant informed her, that both Mr. and Mrs. Benson were out in the carriage, but were expected home before dinner. At that moment, she felt their absence was a relief, and hastily getting out of the carriage, desired the coachman, on his return to town, immediately to ask

whether Lord Fitzhenry had any orders for him—for she still fondly hoped, that on reading her note, he might follow her, and might himself wish for some explanation of what had passed the preceding evening.

During the hour that elapsed before her father and mother returned, Emmeline endeavoured to compose her spirits. She bathed her red and swollen eyes, walked in the fresh air, and, hearing their carriage drive up to the door, resolved to command herself, and went to meet them with a cheerful countenance. But when the spirits are weak, there is nothing so difficult to bear as tenderness. Her father's fond benediction, the smile of delight that beamed in her mother's face, on unexpectedly beholding her, were too much for poor Emmeline, unused as she

was to demonstrations of affection; and falling into her mother's arms, in spite of her resolutions and endeavours, she again burst into tears.

"My dear love! my child!" both exclaimed, "what can be the matter?"

"Nothing, nothing," said Emmeline; "I have not been quite well lately, and my spirits are in consequence weakened; and I was too happy to see you—that is all."

Mrs. Benson shook her head, and looked at her incredulously. Her father, fixing his eyes stedfastly on her face, took her hand.

"Speak to me, my girl," said he. "What is it that so distresses you?"

"Nothing!" again repeated Emmeline in a fainter voice; "I shall soon be quite well."

"Emmy! Emmy!" rejoined her father, "for once I don't believe you; it is too long since you have not been *well*, as you call it; and there is *a* something the matter that I must and will know."

Emmeline averted her head, and did not answer.

"You need not attempt to deceive me any longer, girl," said Mr. Benson, sternly; "I have long suspected that all was not right between you and your husband. I will now know the truth, and I have a right to demand it of you."

Still she was silent.

"What! you will not speak! you will not confide in me!" he continued, his temper rising; "then I must seek for information elsewhere:" and he moved towards the door of the room.

"Oh, my father!" exclaimed Emmeline, terrified—"What would you do?"

"Do? why I shall go to town directly. I shall see Lord Fitzhenry," said Mr. Benson, in a calmer, but decided tone; "and from him I must learn what has passed between you, since you, my own child, will not trust me."

"Oh! speak not so to me, dear father! indeed I have full confidence in your kindness—in your indulgence; but really, I have nothing to tell which you do not know already—I have been to blame, perhaps—I mean I was not aware—I was deceived,—even you dear father"—

"Deceived?" repeated Mr. Benson quickly—catching at the word: "deceived by me? what do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing," said Emmeline, alarmed at her father's unusual look of anger: "we were all to blame, but—but—perhaps it would have been better if—"

Poor Mr. Benson, like many both of his superiors and inferiors could not bear to be supposed to have erred, or even to have been mistaken, and all the less when conscious the imputation was true; in a tone of violence, therefore, which Emmeline had never heard addressed to her, and suddenly letting go her hand, which he had been holding in both of his: "What, Emmeline," said he, "are you so unjust, so ungrateful, as to accuse me as the cause of your misfortunes? blame your poor, doating, old father for having given up his all to secure your happiness? For shame, for

shame, Emmy, I never expected that from you."

"Oh hear me, hear me patiently!" she exclaimed, seizing on his arm.

"No, Emmeline, I can hear no more, bear no more, I have long guessed how matters were between you and Lord Fitzhenry, and still I have forborne. I held my peace as long as I could; but my pride will not allow me to be any longer silent. I will not be trampled upon; I cannot endure to see the delight of my old age, my only child, destroyed by neglect and unkindness. Lord Fitzhenry presumes upon his superior rank. He thinks he may with impunity insult and break the heart of the humble banker's daughter. But his lordship is mistaken; I too have pride as well as he. Curse on *his* rank, curse on *your* money;

they have been the cause of all this; but I will have redress."

"Redress! Good God, what do you mean?" enquired Emmeline, terrified at his words and manner.

"I will insist on an immediate separation; on a divorce, in short, for the law will give it me."

A scream of horror escaped from Emmeline's heart at these words. "No power on earth shall ever separate me from him," she exclaimed, with the wild energy of passion. "Oh! my dear father, be appeased; have patience and all will be well."

She had sunk on her knees, and, overcome with the variety of her painfully contending feelings, her head grew giddy, her sobs choked her, and she fell nearly senseless at Mr. Benson's

feet. Every attention of doating fondness was lavished upon her. Before long, she became more composed, and her parents, whose every feeling was centered in her, seeing how weak she was, both in body and spirits, said no more, but turned their whole endeavours towards cheering and restoring her; avoiding, for the moment, every thing that could renew her sorrows.

After some little time had elapsed, as if by common consent, they all forced themselves to talk on indifferent subjects, but, in the effort, poor Emmeline's lip often quivered. At dinner, she turned away her heavy, sickened eye from the food before her; and when her father filled her glass with wine, bidding her drink it, for that it would do her good, and, assuming a gay manner, pledged

her and drank to her health, tears again rushed into her eyes, as she recollected the pride with which he was always wont on such occasions to unite her husband's name with hers.

The next morning, resolving if possible still to deceive her parents, and by assumed cheerfulness to do away the impression made upon their minds the preceding evening, poor Emmeline entered the breakfast-room with as composed a countenance as she could command, and even forced a smile, when, as in former days, she went up to her father to claim his parental kiss. Mr. Benson, however, did not raise his eyes towards her, or even return the pressure of her hand, but in silence pointed to the seat prepared for her. She looked at her mother, whose eyes were fixed on the table be-

fore her, and she saw that they were red with crying. Twice Emmeline endeavoured at conversation by making some remark on the weather, but no answer was given to her. Mr. Benson's attention seemed entirely engrossed by the newspaper that lay beside him, his breakfast remaining untouched.

Aware that something disagreeable must have happened from the disturbed appearance of her father and mother, a thousand vague but dreadful apprehensions soon took possession of Emmeline's mind, and at last, unable any longer to endure the state of alarm and suspense into which her fears had thrown her, she suddenly seized her father's arm, entreating him for pity's sake to tell her what had so discomposed him, what had happened.

"You, Lady Fitzhenry, can better inform *us* of that," he coldly said, as he put the paper into her hand, and pointed to the following paragraph:

"A singular fracas took place at the Opera on Saturday night; not being yet informed of the particulars, we forbear making any reflections. As it is a double intrigue, and therefore neither party can complain, it is impossible to say how the affair may end. The *chère amie* of the noble lord is well known in the fashionable world both *abroad* and at *home;* and it is not perhaps surprising that the neglected wife should have *pris son parti*, and found a champion to espouse her cause. He is said to be in the *diplomatic* line, and *of course* a particular friend of

the husband. One rumour states the injured wife to have eloped—another that a duel has taken place. Certain it is that two carriages with the F—z—y arms were seen to drive furiously out of Grosvenor-street at different hours and in different directions on Sunday afternoon."

Emmeline turned deadly pale as she read this cruel paragraph; but a still more ghastly hue spread itself over her mother's face as she anxiously watched her daughter's countenance, and fancied that in her emotion she read confession of guilt.

There was a dead silence. Emmeline, entirely satisfied as to her own perfect innocence, and horror-stricken by the

latter part of the paragraph relating to the duel, was occupied in dwelling on the possibility of there being any foundation for the rumour; and her whole mind was so engrossed by that one thought, the safety of Fitzhenry, that she did not even think of exculpating herself from the charge. Indeed, she had totally forgotten the presence even of her parents, when Mr. Benson, striking his hand with violence on the table, in a voice of agony exclaimed—

"Speak Emmeline, are you innocent? or am I for ever disgraced?"

Emmeline startled by her father's vehemence, looked wildly at him for an instant, as if not understanding his words.

"I see, but too plainly, how it is.

Don't speak, don't speak," he continued quickly; and, covering his face with both his hands, he gave way to the violence of his feelings.

Completely roused by the burst of passion in one so seldom moved to tears, Emmeline threw herself on her knees beside him, and, endeavouring to take hold of his hand, exclaimed,

" Oh, my father, what can all this mean? is it possible you can suspect?—God knows how innocent I am."

Mr. Benson, wiping away his tears, looked at her for an instant in silence. " Repeat those blessed words again, child, for I must believe you."

" By the God of truth!" exclaimed Emmeline, as she clasped her hands with fervency and fixed her eyes stead-

fastly on Mr. Benson, "I am innocent of having, in thought, word, or deed, departed from the love and duty, I swore to my husband at the altar. Alas!" added she, as she hid her face in her father's bosom, "I only love him too well, too entirely for my happiness." These last words became indistinct, and choked by her tears.

"Thank God, thank God!" repeated Mr. Benson, with a sort of hurried nervousness of manner, as he kissed his daughter's forehead: "I could not have borne that; your dishonour I could not have borne, Emmy, it would soon have brought me to my grave. I believe you, Emmeline, on my honour I do; you never in your life deceived me; but what does that cursed story mean?"

pointing to the paragraph to which his mind seemed again to have returned with doubt and anxiety.

"I will tell you all, as far as ——" and Emmeline stopped short, for how could she explain what had passed, without drawing on a necessary confession of her whole sad story.

"No more concealments, Emmy, I will and must know all," said Mr. Benson sternly.

Emmeline looked at her father as if supplicating for pity.

"Spare her now Mr. Benson," said her mother as she folded her in her arms: "we have it from her own true lips, that she is blameless, and let what will have happened, we can bear any thing now."

"Bless you, bless you for believing me," said Emmeline, as she threw her arms round her mother's neck in gratitude: "but," added she, with a melancholy and reproachful look, "my father does not, he still doubts me."

"No, my girl, indeed I don't," cried Mr, Benson: "do you think I would call you my Emmy, and let you remain one instant under my roof if I thought you were disgraced. On my honour, I believe you, but I am fretted and unhappy. I have toiled for your happiness, and it has ended in nothing but mortification; for I see my darling is not happy, which is more than I can bear:" and tears once more rushed into his eyes. "And who the deuce do they mean by their 'diplomatic champion?'" added he, again casting his eyes on the paragraph.

"The whole is an abominable falsehood," said Emmeline, in a hurried manner. "They mean Mr. Pelham, I suppose, for he was with me;" and she reddened as she spoke, at the bare possibility of such an insinuation. "Coming out of the opera-house last night, there was a battle between the coachmen —and it seemed as if something disagreeable had passed between Lord Fitzhenry and Mr. Pelham—but it must have been only a misunderstanding—no one was to blame—only when I parted from them last night, they certainly seemed much irritated against each other."

"And have you not seen your husband since?" eagerly enquired Mr. Benson.

"No," said Emmeline, in a low tone,

and averting her head. Mr. Benson gave a significant shrug of his shoulders.

"And pray what had you, and Mr. Pelham, and Lord Fitzhenry to do with the fighting of the coachmen; and, above all, what in the name of wonder, had his *chère amie*, as the idiots call her, to do with it at all? whose carriage fought with yours? for I presume, you and your husband were together; surely you can sit in the same coach, though you can't sleep in the same room?"

"I really can't tell—it was all such a confusion," replied Emmeline, colouring deeply. "But, dear father, don't waste time, but, for pity's sake, send some one to Grosvenor-street, and ask if all is well—and yet, perhaps," added she, the next minute, alarmed at the possible

consequences of her own suggestion, "perhaps it will be better not—it must be all a foolish story."

"I shall go myself to Lord Fitzhenry's," said Mr. Benson, after a moment's reflection.

"*You* go?" exclaimed Emmeline, terrified—"indeed there is no necessity—it is only a trifle—in fact nothing has occurred, only the carriage —— I assure you, Lord Fitzhenry will be quite surprised to see you—perhaps displeased—indeed you had better not go."

"I shall judge for myself," said Mr. Benson, coldly. "I don't believe one word about the carriage story; your husband would not be such a fool as to fight about a scratched pannel; and as for his displeasure, I shall care little for that,

for he seems very little to care for mine."

This intention of her father's seriously alarmed Emmeline; for, in the state of irritation, in which both he and Lord Fitzhenry then were, she dreaded the result of their meeting; and, clinging to Mr. Benson, she ejaculated—"Oh, then pray let me go with you!"

Brought up in the good old fashioned system of filial obedience and dependence, Emmeline, although the object of the tenderest affection, had no idea even now that she was a wife, of putting her will in opposition to that of her parents, or of boldly declaring any determination of her own. She could only entreat, and *that* her countenance did most eloquently, during the moment or two that now

passed before Mr. Benson answered her. At length, he consented, saying—"Yes; I believe that will be best, for I shall by that means hear both sides."

These words raised fresh apprehensions in Emmeline's mind, for she saw that her father's intention was to come to some explanation with her husband; and good, even kind as she knew those intentions were, yet she felt, that any interference on his part, particularly at that moment, would only widen the breach between them, and make her situation worse, by bringing matters to that crisis from which she shrank with dismay. She, therefore, said every thing she could venture upon, to induce him to desist; but her words seemed only to irritate him still more against Lord Fitz-

henry, and to make him the more resolved on seeking an interview with him; so at last, finding how vain were all her arguments, and that having settled the matter in his own mind, Mr. Benson would listen to no excuse, no reason, that she could give for changing her opinion so quickly, Emmeline gave up the point in despair, and, in a short time, she and her father were on the road to town.

At first, the miles appeared to her to be endless, but, as they drew near town, dreading the possible result of their visit to Grosvenor-street, poor Emmeline was several times tempted to beg the driver might slacken his pace, but she controlled her nervous agitation as well as she could, and they drove on in silence, till they entered London; when

she suddenly seized Mr. Benson's hand, saying, with a look of entreaty—" If we see him, you will leave all to me,—indeed, he is no way to blame, only a misunderstanding, which I shall soon be able to clear up."

" Ay, and it *shall* be cleared up," replied Mr. Benson. " If you, Lady Fitzhenry, are content to let this vile slur remain on your reputation, I am not, and I shall oblige those who can refute it, to do so. I shall most certainly see Lord Fitzhenry, and I must from him get a better explanation of all this strange business, than I can from you. My God!" added he, after a moment's pause, as if speaking to himself—" to think that my daughter's name should appear in a public paper, with such an im-

putation attached to it! to think, that after all my labours, it should have come to this!" And, after striking his cane several times with impatience on the bottom of the carriage, he suddenly, as if he thought greater speed would relieve his feelings, bade the coachman drive faster.

This injunction was the means of soon bringing them into Grosvenor-square; and poor Emmeline's agitation became almost unbearable. What was she going to learn? what was going to be her fate? for on the next hour she felt that it depended. They drove up to the door of her husband's house—of her own home—and yet she shrunk back, in dread and dismay. A hasty glance showed her, that all the shutters were closed—and a cold, deadly sickness came over her. The servant

knocked—but no one answered—he knocked again, and rung; and at length the porter appeared, and a parley ensued between him and Mr. Benson's servant.

Emmeline could endure the suspense no longer; and, with the paleness of death on her face, grasping her father's arm—"In pity!" she cried, "speak to the man yourself." Mr. Benson beckoned him to the carriage window.

"I want to see Lord Fitzhenry," said he. "Is he at home?"

"No, sir; neither my lord nor my lady are at home"—for Emmeline had so shrunk to the back of the carriage, that the man did not see her.

"Is Lord Fitzhenry quite well?" rejoined Mr. Benson, not knowing very well how to get at the information he wanted.

"Yes, sir! I believe so," said the porter, apparently surprised at the question. "His lordship went away yesterday afternoon; he did not leave his room till late, but I did not hear that he was any ways ill; I thought my lady had gone to Charlton."

"Do you know where he is gone to?" continued Mr. Benson.

"No, I really can't say; his lordship ordered post horses in a great hurry, and the carriage was to take him up at some place in town, but I really can't tell where; but I will enquire in the house if any one knows."

"Did he leave word when he was to return?"

"No, my lord said nothing, and we

do not expect him back for some days, as he gave no orders."

A new and appalling idea now flashed across Emmeline's mind—could Fitzhenry and Lady Florence have fled together! and, not content with the entire possession of each other's affections, could they have determined by that open act, at once to rid themselves of the thraldom of their respective marriages! There was nothing of which she could not suspect Lady Florence; but her heart smote her for thus, even for an instant, accusing Fitzhenry; and, shocked at her own surmises, she hastily enquired whether Lord Fitzhenry had left no letter, no message for her.

"Not that I knows of, my lady," said the porter, bowing to Emmeline, and

evidently astonished at her question, as well as at her appearance, as she had hitherto remained concealed behind Mr. Benson; but I will go and enquire."

"This is all very strange," muttered Mr. Benson to himself, while he was gone; "I can't make it out for the life of me."

As for poor Emmeline, she was totally unable to express, or even to form an opinion; so many fearful apprehensions succeeded each other in her mind. After an interval of time, which appeared to her endless, the man returned with a note in his hand.

"I can hear of no letter, my lady; but this note the housekeeper found in your ladyship's room; perhaps it is what you mean."

Emmeline eagerly seized it; but what

was her mortification on finding it was her own note to Fitzhenry, with the seal still unbroken. In the confusion of her mind, she could not recollect whether, on leaving home the preceding day, she had given any orders about it: if she had, she must conclude, that Fitzhenry, occupied by other objects, had neglected, perhaps scorned, to read it. But at all events, as that note was unread, he must have gone from home in the full conviction that she, on her part, had left it in open, declared war.

Quite overcome by the combination of distressing circumstances in which she was placed, after tearing her ill-fated note in a thousand pieces, with a vehemence of impatience very foreign to her nature, Emmeline again sunk back in

the carriage, to conceal her disordered state from the servants. There was a moment's pause. At length Mr. Benson, enquiring where Mr. Pelham lived, desired the coachman to drive to his house. Emmeline drew down the blind, spoke not a word, but seemed to give herself up to her fate in despair.

When they reached the end of the street to which they had been directed, Mr. Benson stopped the carriage, and saying he would return to her directly, got out. He was some time absent: when he returned, he evidently was endeavouring to maintain a composure which he did not feel.

"Mr. Pelham has likewise left London," said he. "He too went away yesterday evening with post horses—

very strange; but, I suppose, some junket out of town," added he, making an awkward attempt at cheerfulness. The step of the carriage was let down for him. "Hang me!" continued Mr. Benson, "if I know what to do next, or where to go to. To drive after them would really be a wild-goose chase; for the chances are a hundred to one against our taking the same road; for the plague is, that one don't know at all where they are gone to. Mr. Pelham's servants, too, can't tell where their master went—a parcel of stupid, outlandish boobies, that can't speak Christian-like language."

And apparently much distressed and perplexed, Mr. Benson, with one foot on the step of the carriage, looked anxiously up and down the street, as if in the hope

of seeing some one, or something, that could suggest an idea to him.

"Let us return to Charlton, directly," said Emmeline, in a low, broken voice; for a new apprehension had entered her mind. When she reflected on the gentle nature of Pelham's temper, on his devoted affection for Fitzhenry, and adverted to the falsehood of the newspaper-story in the part relating to herself, her mind began to be much easier with regard to the report of the duel. As to Fitzhenry's sudden departure from town, it was certainly strange; and in spite of her endeavours to combat the idea, she could not help interpreting it in a way the most agonizing to her feelings: but still it was just possible that even there she might be mistaken; and if so, nothing

would be more likely to incense Fitzhenry against her, or to widen the breach between them, than finding she was following his steps like a spy; and that even Mr. Benson took upon himself to enquire into his actions. The instant this idea entered her mind, her whole anxiety was to return to Charlton, and there wait patiently till time explained this alarming business; and a very few hours must, she thought, relieve her at least from suspense: she therefore again intreated that they might go back to Charlton immediately.

Mr. Benson paused for a minute or two, as if ruminating in his own mind on some method of obtaining information; but none occurring, he, in a dejected tone, bade the servants return

home. The coachman turned his horses' heads, and the father and daughter travelled the nine weary miles back to Charlton in total silence.

Mrs. Benson, who had been anxiously awaiting their return, soon saw she had little good to learn; and forebore to question Emmeline; but, after putting into her hand a letter that had come for her during her absence, went to learn what had passed from Mr. Benson.

The letter was from Mr. Pelham: it contained these words, and was dated Sunday evening.

"I cannot, as I had hoped and intended, see you to-day, nor indeed to-morrow. I find Fitzhenry has left town, and I am about to follow him. Depend

on me for doing all that friendship can do, to restore him to you. So I still say, 'be of good cheer.' As soon as Fitzhenry and I have met, I am sure I shall be able to bring you good news. By Wednesday, I think, you may depend on seeing me; or, at all events, on hearing from me; and I don't despair of even bringing Fitzhenry with me."

This letter, meant to express comfort and hope, conveyed the very reverse to Emmeline's sick mind; she had now no doubt but that Fitzhenry and Lady Florence had left town together, and that if Pelham attempted at any remonstrance or interference, however mild and sensible, still every thing was to be feared from his meeting with her husband

under such circumstances. That she had parted with Fitzhenry for ever, seemed now but too certain. There was a mystery in Pelham's letter that evidently showed he had something to conceal, and that could only be the most dreadful of all intelligence to her. Poor Emmeline raised her streaming eyes to heaven, while she clasped her hands in the energy of suffering, but not one prayer could she utter. Alas! what had she to ask? Could she wish again to behold him who scorned, who loathed, who had, in short, fled from her? And could she wish to cease to love him? What affectionate mind but recoils with horror from the dreary thought? She might, indeed, pray for release from an existence which was become insupport-

able to her! And, perhaps, in the rebellion of a young and suffering heart, she did give utterance to the impatient wish. But let mortals adore the Merciful Power, who, pitying the weakness of short-sighted humanity, marks not down those prayers. It is the first pang of severe suffering that wrings them from us; in time, we learn to endure; and, in the evening of a chequered life we look back, perhaps, on those very moments of sorrow with the greatest gratitude, and say with the poet—

"Amid my list of blessings infinite,
Stands this the foremost—that my heart has bled."

The next morning the following paragraph, which appeared in the newspaper, seemed very much to relieve Mr.

Benson; but, if possible, it only increased Emmeline's apprehensions.

"It is with sincere pleasure that we can confidently contradict a report in our last, respecting a certain noble pair in Grosvenor Street, in so far at least as the fair fame of *one* of the ladies is concerned. Lady F——y, we understand, merely left town in order to pay a visit to her father at Ch—l—n, where she now is. A legal separation between the parties may however be anticipated, as it is certain that the noble Lord has also most abruptly left home, and, it is whispered, not *alone*. Rumour also states that the diplomatic friend has followed the fugitives, in order, if possible, to prevent the scandal of a public eclat."

Mr. Benson's feelings had been so entirely engrossed by that part of the first newspaper story, alluding to his daughter's supposed levity of conduct, and his mind was so relieved by this public and honourable acquittal, that he might have overlooked the rest of the paragraph just mentioned, had not Emmeline's look of misery reminded him, that though that unfounded subject for distress was removed, all her but too real causes for anxiety remained.

Tuesday passed without any intelligence of any kind reaching them. Wednesday at length arrived, and during its heavy hours, the perturbation of Emmeline's agitated mind was painful to witness. For on what Pelham was that day to impart, she felt her future fate in life depended.

With one so young, and unused to sorrow, hope still will linger, and even though against her reason and her conviction, the concluding words in Pelham's letter sometimes for an instant caused a thrill of pleasure to her heart, and she gave way to delightful anticipations. Fitzhenry might have mistaken *her* feelings towards him: she was aware that latterly she had given way to irritation in her manner. Pelham might let him into the real state of her affections, for she well knew that that friend had read her heart right, and, perhaps, when her husband knew all, his better feelings would prevail, and would restore him to her.

But when Emmeline's imagination had carried her thus far, the chilling

conviction of the truth came at once to destroy these dreams of happiness, and make place for despair. Thus, in all the miserable agitation of doubt and anxiety, she passed the day listening to every sound, starting at the noise of every bell, and the opening of every door; and so wild were sometimes her fantasies, that she more than once thought she heard her husband's step on the stairs, and his voice in the passage that led to her room. But the day passed, and no one came.

Late in the evening, when she had nearly given up all hope, she heard the door bell ring. She started up—every pulse throbbed—unable to move from her place, she remained breathless, watching the door: it opened, but no

Fitzhenry appeared; and the servant entering, brought her a letter. It was not Fitzhenry's hand-writing. A cold tremor crept over her; the room swam round her, and the letter fell from her hands. Her mother caught it up, and seeing how unable her daughter was herself to read it, and dreading the effects of such violent agitation on her already weakened frame, she ventured to break the seal, and hastily glancing her eyes over its contents. "My child," said she, taking Emmeline's icy hand, "it is from your friend Mr. Pelham. He says, he could not, as he meant, come to you; that pressing public affairs oblige him to return immediately to Vienna. He is already on his way to Dover. Your husband is quite well—but——"

"But what?" exclaimed Emmeline, with a look of horror.

"He too is gone abroad."

"Gone!" repeated Emmeline wildly; "then it is all over:" and she was carried senseless to her bed.

Her wretched parents wept and prayed by her; for hers was a sorrow to which no earthly comfort could be given. In a few hours, however, composure—that dreadful composure of exhausted nature—returned, and the first minute she could read, she asked for Mr. Pelham's letter. It contained these words:

"You will be surprised, and I fear painfully so, when you hear we are leaving England. Some unforeseen public affairs oblige me instantly to return

to the Continent; and, I am going to take Fitzhenry with me: but, for God's sake, keep up your spirits; he is well, and we have had a great deal of conversation. In time, you shall know all; and very soon, I am sure, he will be restored to you; but my poor friend's mind is at present in a state approaching to delirium; and we must be patient with him.

"Dearest Lady Fitzhenry, I would not for the world give you false hopes; but, I still repeat, that all will be well; you deserve to be happy, and heaven will take care that you shall be so. Fitzhenry has been infatuated, blinded, deceived, every way. But his eyes are now opened, and, (not for the world would I deceive you, even to give you one

moment of false happiness,) trust me, he admires and loves you; I was certain such excellence could not long be thrown away upon one so fitted to appreciate it. The fatal madness which has hitherto rendered him insensible to his real happiness, is now at an end—on my honour it is.

"I have time for no more; the carriage is at the door; I am only waiting for Fitzhenry; he knows I am writing to you; you shall ere long hear from me again."

Emmeline hardly knew what to conclude from this letter; she read it over and over. Sometimes she interpreted its contents favourably to her feelings; but, in general, the impression it left

was not that of hope. She believed Pelham, when he told her that Fitzhenry's connexion with Lady Florence was at an end; she must believe such solemn assurances; but what had she gained? Her rival, no longer the cause, still her husband fled from her. What could that mean, but that still she had to encounter settled, determined aversion? for he was leaving England without one word, one attempt at reconciliation—and with no time even named for his return. In short, in spite of Pelham's encouragement, she felt but too well convinced their separation was for ever.

Sorrow sunk deeply into Emmeline's heart; but, for her parent's sake, she resolved to exert herself. She left her room, agreed to go out into the fresh

air; acquiesced in whatever was proposed to her; forced herself to converse on indifferent subjects; and even sometimes endeavoured at cheerfulness. But such exertions could not deceive. The "sickness of hope deferred," preyed on her health; she grew daily thinner; and her cheeks were either deadly pale, or flushed with the deepest feverish crimson.

Poor Mrs. Benson gazed at her in silent anxiety. There was their Emmeline again returned to them, to the same place, the same quiet home, avocations and duties she used to perform; but, how changed! Formerly, she was their joy, their pride: to look on her laughing eyes, and on her fresh smooth cheek, had been enough to make them happy;

but now the sight was misery. Mr. Benson also was changed. Though sometimes, in the kind endeavour to cheer his melancholy companions, he attempted to resume his usual loquacity, and even tried his bad jokes; yet, as they no longer proceeded from an exuberantly happy heart, they had lost their only merit; and, seeing how ill they in general succeeded, and that his intended wit and mirth oftener forced tears than smiles from his suffering daughter, he at last gave up the attempt entirely, and seemed to resign himself to the sadness which oppressed him. He appeared also to have entirely lost his usual bustling activity. He often stood for hours at the window, with his hands in his pockets, staring at the blue sky and green grass, objects

which he had never been seen to gaze at before; or, sitting with the newspaper in his hand, reading over and over the same page, almost unconscious of the words before him; for now, neither public news, nor even the price of stocks, seemed to have power to arrest his attention.

Fitzhenry was never named among them, nor that painful subject any way alluded to.

One day, however, that Mr. Benson and Emmeline were alone together, after the former had, as was now usual to him, sat a long time silent, he suddenly looked up, and, addressing her in the decided tone of one who has well considered the matter of which he is about to treat—

"Emmy!" said he—for he had now quite left off calling her Lady Fitzhenry, which he had, with apparently proud satisfaction after her marriage, always done—"Emmy, I have indulged your fancies all this time—I have complied with your request—I have said nothing—done nothing. In short, to please you, I have, in truth, made but a silly figure; but this cannot go on—it is impossible—you cannot yourself wish it. Something decided must be settled between you and your husband."

Emmeline's pale cheek grew still paler, and, in answer, she put into her father's hand Mr. Pelham's last letter. He read it over and over and over several times, looked at the date, the signature, the direction, even with the precaution and

accuracy of business, and then returning it—

"I can't make head or tail of it. Lord Fitzhenry and you, Emmy, and your diplomatic champion, are all beyond my comprehension. I declare I don't know what any of you would be at. If your husband has turned off his kept mistress, as I suppose he has by this, (shame on him ever to have had one—and another man's wife, too, into the bargain,) why, now the coast is clear, why can't he come and fetch you, his lawful wife, home, and live respectably, and be at least decently civil to you. What the deuce is he gone abroad for? unless indeed it is to look out for some new lady, being, I suppose, tired of the old one—for such madams, I believe,

abound at Paris. In short, Emmy, I will not let this sort of thing go on any longer. I will give you one month; and if during that time, your husband makes no advances towards a reconciliation, I will then come forward. Surely, Emmeline, your own pride must make you wish that I should."

"Pride!" repeated Emmeline, mournfully. "Oh! my father, what has pride to do with affection?"

"What!" rejoined her father, warmly, "can you tamely submit to be insulted and neglected as you are? And pray what has affection to do with the business? when this man don't seem to care one farthing for you; and, now indeed that the truth comes out, it seems he never did. A pretty object for

affection truly. I thought you had better feelings. Fool! idiot! that I was," continued he, striking his forehead, "to be so proud of this marriage. Could I have guessed how matters would have turned out, I had rather have seen you the wife of the lowest clerk in my banking-house, than that of this Lord Fitzhenry, or any other lord in Christendom with his vile paramour. But who would have thought it of him? such a fine young man as he was. I always liked the lad; there was something so frank and manly about him. Do you remember those balls we used to give on your birth-day, Emmy, when he always danced with you, as a thing of course? How you used to tear about the room together like a couple of madcaps, looking so happy! Then, when he took

leave of you going abroad—Lord, I remember it as if it was but yesterday—he kissed you and called you his little wife. My silly heart jumped with joy at those words. And then he sent you that watch which I see still hanging round your neck. I thought all that promised so well. Who could have dreamt of his turning out as he has done? And even since your marriage at Arlingford, how civil and pleasant he was to me, and to you even seemingly. I really can hardly now bring myself to believe any one so young can be so deceitful and hardened!"

How long Mr. Benson might have gone on thus giving vent to the thoughts which apparently now constantly engrossed his mind, it is impossible to say; for, kind-

hearted and affectionate as he was, he had so little notion of the nature of love, of the refinement of poor Emmeline's passion, and of the feelings of a lacerated heart that recoils from every touch, that he had no idea he was running daggers into hers; till, no longer able to endure the torture of his words, and grasping his arm in agony, "Oh, my father!" she exclaimed, "do not talk of him."

"Well, well," said he, patting her hand as he looked with concern on her suffering countenance, "if it displeases you, we need not talk of the matter just now; but remember, Emmy, one month more, and I *will* have my own way in this business."

CHAPTER IV.

"Un siecle d'attente—un jour de bonheur."

Ten days of the month passed, and still no intelligence of any sort about Lord Fitzhenry reached Charlton.

Emmeline saw his and Pelham's name in the papers among those who had crossed the water to Calais; but she heard no more. This strange silence seemed to confirm her husband's hostile determination with regard to her, and to fix her future fate. She uttered no com-

plaint, shed no tears, was silent, and resigned, and appeared to be some figure wound up to perform the ordinary actions of life without taking any part in them, so still was her composure. But sometimes, when her mother looked at her, pressed her hand, or kissed her pale cheek, then, a momentary convulsive sob would escape from her oppressed bosom, and a solitary burning tear would steal down her face.

There is a dead pause in affliction which is dreadful. As long as we have to act, to exert ourselves, even though those exertions may be painful, still they are more bearable than sitting down quietly with grief, without any thing to look to. When day after day passes the same, and when at last from the same-

ness of our thoughts and feelings, even suffering has no longer power to affect us, our tears cease to flow, though the heart within is breaking.

The dreary desolation of her future existence, from which, appalled at the prospect, she at first shrunk with horror, now constantly occupied her, to the exclusion of every other thought, and of every ray of hope. A short twelvemonth back, knowing no felicity beyond loving, and being beloved by her fond parents, she was at peace, and happy—now, new feelings, new powers of heart, unknown to herself before, had been awakened in her, and she hated herself when she felt—(and she could not help feeling it) that not all their kindness, all their partial affec-

tion, could soothe and occupy a heart which *love*, love for Fitzhenry had now so entirely engrossed. Love is a draught of so inebriating a quality, that it is long before one who has known its delirious power can (even when that delirium ceases) return satisfied to the sober feelings of friendship. The sun which had warmed and illumined life is set; and all other near and dear affections, are as the quiet cold rays of moonlight to the bereaved soul which shivers beneath their chilling influence.

How often when endeavouring to soothe those who are writhing under such sorrows, are the affections of parent and kindred offered as compensations. But such comfort, sickening the heart at its own ingratitude, only

adds to its misery. Time alone, the sobering influence of years, can heal such wounds, or rather skin them over, for the scar remains, till at last it thickens and hardens, rendering it insensible to every impression; but is that happiness? When a sacred voice announced, that "a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife"—it plainly told how overwhelming such feelings were intended to be; and if allowed, nay, commmanded in man, how much more in woman, whose existence is made up of the affections of the heart!

Poor Emmeline endeavoured to resume her usual occupations, but in vain. She tried to read—it was impossible; once or twice, in the wish to pass the

heavy hours, she proposed reading aloud to her mother, as she had formerly done. Her lips mechanically uttered the words; but, at a pause, Mrs. Benson making some remark on the book, Emmeline startled at the sound of her voice—looked vacantly at her, apparently unconscious of what she alluded to. The mother, suppressing a sigh, endeavoured at some explanation, but seeing how hopeless was the attempt to fix her daughter's mind on any subject, she quietly closed the book, saying, "Emmy, my love, we will continue that some other time, for I think reading hurts your eyes."

Emmeline gave her a meanless, melancholy smile in answer, and sat in silence; her eyes fixed on the volume,

as if even unconscious that their lecture was over. Lost as she was in thought, it would perhaps have been difficult for her to have told what those thoughts were, all was so vague; and on no one circumstance in her situation, could she rest her mind with expectation of any sort. Even religion could bring her little comfort. Had Fitzhenry, penitent towards heaven and herself, been taken from her by death, she would have found peace for her thoughts in piety. She could have said to her widowed heart—we shall meet again. But that way, Emmeline, shuddering, dared not look. Often too, she aggravated her distress by reproaching herself for having brought sorrow and melancholy to that home, which had been always hitherto one of content

and cheerfulness; and she sometimes thought it was her duty to leave it, and relieve her parents of her painful presence—but whither could she go? was Arlingford still her home? could she venture to return there?

Thus, day after day sadly passed without her being able to form any plan for herself or the future, till she was one morning roused from the state of stupor into which she had sunk, by Lord Arlingford being suddenly announced.

Since the marriage, for which both he and Mr. Benson had been so equally anxious, there had been little intercourse between them. Lord Arlingford having obtained his object, and secured Emmeline's fortune, he was not particularly

anxious to keep up any thing like intimacy with Mr. Benson, whose honest, blunt vulgarity, did not at all suit the refined elegance of his own manners and habits.

Emmeline was with her mother alone when Lord Arlingford entered. She turned deadly pale; for, in a minute, a thousand apprehensions as to the possible purport of his visit occurred to her; and, hardly knowing in what manner to meet him, she remained in her place, with the feelings of a criminal awaiting the sentence of his judge. But such alarming fears were soon dissipated—his manner was more than usually kind—she was his "dear Emmeline, his pretty daughter." He quite overcame Mrs. Benson with civilities, and was so very particular and anxious in his enquiries after Mr.

Benson, and whether he could not have the pleasure of seeing him, that at last Emmeline thought it best to go and inform her father of his visit, hoping that Lord Arlingford's conciliatory manner might pacify his justly indignant feelings. When she told him who was in the drawing-room with her mother,——

"I know it—I know it quite well child," said he, impatiently; "you need not have come for me; why did you not say I was out, or busy, or sick? I am sure you may say the last with truth, for I am not half the man I used to be. I don't want to see him; he is only come to try and palaver me over; and if I do go down to him, what in the world can we say to each other? Your marriage is the only thing we have talked

about these last ten years, and the less now said of that the better, I am sure: and I am sore here," said the good old citizen, seizing on his waistcoat, and rubbing it across his breast; "and I don't want him to make matters worse. I wish his lordship had staid at home; for what the deuce can he be come here for?"

"For no unkind purpose, I am sure," said Emmeline, wishing to pacify her father—"for his manner to me is more than usually affectionate. For my sake, dear father, come down to him, and be cordial to him," said she, grasping his hand with fervency, while her imploring eyes, fixed on his face, spoke all the feelings of heart.

"You are a silly girl, Emmy," said her father: "you have no proper pride.

This abominable husband of yours has made a perfect fool of you; but go away to the drawing-room; say I will be down directly. Plague on him, he has turned me quite topsy-turvy."

Emmeline returned to Lord Arlingford, and was happy to find him and her mother conversing on indifferent subjects. In nervous agitation, she seated herself by them, listening with painful anxiety for her father's approach—while her eyes and ears were fixed on Lord Arlingford, eagerly watching for every look, every tone, that bore the slightest resemblance to his son. It is hard to say, whether there is most pain or pleasure in such recollections of a beloved object, but who can help catching at them? A glance, a word will sometimes make the heart start

from a stupor of grief to which it had been reduced, and give it a passing sensation of something we, at the moment, mistake for happiness. So it was with Emmeline; and, lost in such thoughts, she sat gazing on the still handsome countenance of Lord Arlingford, till, hearing her father's step, she hastily rose, and walked towards the window, to conceal her nervous apprehensions as to the result of their meeting.

Mr. Benson entered the room with a knit brow and both hands in his pockets; but Lord Arlingford's decided resolution to meet him cordially, at last forced one hand out of its repulsive retreat.

"I am glad to find our Emmeline looking better than I expected," said Lord Arlingford, a little at a loss for a

subject to begin with—the coldness of Mr. Benson's look and manner having rather disconcerted him. "I heard she had left town on account of her health, the heat having been too much for her."

"I don't know what your lordship expected," said Mr. Benson, surlily, "but Lady Fitzhenry can scarcely look worse than she does."

Lord Arlingford not seeming to heed the incivility of his answer, continued—"Ernest, too, did well to leave London, for he knocked himself up in the House of Commons. No constitution can stand it; and I was quite glad when I heard he had obtained *leave* of *absence* to take a little trip on the continent, with his friend Mr. Pelham,"—and Lord Arlingford glanced at Emmeline, with a look

which meant to express gallant pleasantry, but the anxiety which accompanied it, was very perceptible.

Mr. Benson cleared his throat—seemed beating the time of some tune on his knee, and, after a moment's pause, said: "In my time, husbands and wives took those little trips together; but I presume that is no longer the fashion; at least, not at the west end of the town."

Lord Arlingford made no reply—but, turning to Emmeline—"I suppose you can hardly have heard from our travellers yet; that lazy boy, Ernest, has not written to me one word since he went. Indeed, it was the newspapers that first informed me of his departure; but, in truth, I believe the wind has been directly

contrary for packets coming over. I never remember, at this time of the year, such a continuation of high winds; and those diplomatic people always travel *ventre à terre*, in order, I suppose, to give a vast opinion of their importance; so we must not be too severe on Fitzhenry."

Emmeline tried to speak; her nervous lips moved, but not a word could she articulate; and her mother, wishing to change the subject, made some remarks on the freshness and beauty of the country.

"Yes, indeed it is particularly beautiful just now," said Arlingford; "and I do wonder how people can remain in town as they do; however, numbers have followed our wise example, and I thought the streets looked very dull and empty

to-day, as I passed through. I suppose, Lady Fitzhenry, you have no thoughts of returning to Grosvenor Street, while Ernest is away. I dare say he would not trust you in the gay world of London without him," added he laughing.

Emmeline, without raising her eyes from the carpet, on which they had been fixed, replied, that she meant to remain at Charlton some time longer.

There was a dead pause. Poor Mrs. Benson was painfully occupied in observing her daughter; and Mr. Benson seemed resolved on avoiding every thing like advances to his visitor, who, at last, was again forced to start a new subject. Taking, therefore, a desperate resolution to come at once to the point, and ascertain how matters were likely to be be-

tween him and the Benson family, or rather, between his son and daughter-in-law, he said, "the principal object of my visit to-day, was to try and persuade you all three to come and pay me a visit at Wimbledon. I am now quite alone, and it would really be a charity"—and he addressed himself particularly to Mr. Benson.

"You know I am a man of business, my lord," said he dryly—"my time is little at my own disposal. I cannot at present absent myself from home; and as for Emmeline, I do not think she is just now in a state to make any visits."

"But, coming to me," rejoined Lord Arlingford, with most determined civility and good humour, "would only be exchanging one home for another. My

dear Emmeline, will you not indulge me?"

Emmeline made some answer, but her words were unintelligible. She saw, every minute, that Mr. Benson's temper was rising, and she shook from head to foot.

"Well, you will think of it, and let me know when you feel inclined to come," said Lord Arlingford, seeing it was useless to endeavour to press the matter any further—"and, perhaps, if we put it off a little, Mr. and Mrs. Benson will be able to accompany you."

Mr. Benson made no answer; he had left his seat, and was restlessly fidgeting about the room. "So it shall remain that you write to me, and name your own day," added Lord Arlingford, rising.

"Yes, your lordship will shortly hear from me," said Mr. Benson, with a meaning, in his tone and manner, that Emmeline understood but too well; and, unasked, he rung the bell.

"Well, God bless you, my fair Emmeline," said Lord Arlingford, kissing her on both cheeks, with a sort of flirting gallantry of manner that was so habitual to him, that neither age nor the infirmities of sickness had altered it, and which he maintained even with his daughter-in-law. "Make haste and recover the roses which, I must confess, the dissipation of London has a little *flétri*, that Ernest may find you in bloom and beauty on his return; and we must mutually let each other know when we hear from him; I am the most interested in the

bargain, as I think we can guess who will have the first intelligence."

Again Lord Arlingford forced Mr. Benson's reluctant hand into his, and overcoming Mrs. Benson with civil speeches, went to his carriage. Mr. Benson constrained himself so far as to accompany his visitor to the hall-door.

"By the bye, my dear Benson," said Lord Arlingford, stepping back just as he was entering the carriage, "when you do come, you shall find my horses to meet you in London, for it is too far to come the whole way with your own, and mine have positively nothing to do, so that it will be a kindness to give them a little exercise."

"Your lordship is very kind," said the banker, with an expression of irony, and

ill concealed, offended pride on his countenance, "*whenever* I do visit you, I will certainly claim your obliging offer."

After Lord Arlingford had driven off, all remained for some time silent; at length Mr. Benson muttered to himself, "I see through it all—I am not the fool he takes me for—I am not to be coaxed by a few civil speeches from a lord into mean forbearance. A fortnight more, and I shall most assuredly visit his lordship, and he shall see whom he has to deal with. *You*, Emmeline, I dare say, would wish to go and curry favour with him, that he may speak a word in your favour to his precious son, and you may, if you please; but I'll be d—d if I do, till it is to tell him a bit of my mind, and inform him, in pretty plain terms, that you and

your husband are two, and that the law will give us redress."

And so saying, Mr. Benson left the room more irritated in temper than Emmeline had ever seen him. Her head fell on her hands, and her long-stifled feelings burst forth.

"Bear up, dearest Emmy," said her mother, endeavouring to soothe her; "surely this visit of Lord Arlingford's must, in many ways, give you comfort. He never would have come unless he had known that all was likely soon to be explained, and to end well between you and your husband."

Emmeline shook her head. "You don't know them as I do. No two beings can be so different, can act on such different motives, as Lord Arlingford and

—— Fitzhenry." At that name, that beloved name, for the first time for long uttered by herself, she sobbed as if her heart would break. "And then my father," she continued, "he terrifies me. Oh! that he could, that he would for my sake, be more patient, more conciliatory! He talks, too, always of pride, and forgets that one can have none where one loves as I do. Oh! if I could but see *him* once again!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands, "I believe I could on my knees entreat of him to be kind to me, to love me—I am so very miserable; and yet when I was with him, when I saw him every day, I was cold and repulsive, I know I was; I believe I was the most to blame. I dare say I could have won upon his kindness had I acted

differently; for he is so kind to every body, every thing—but me. It must have been all my fault."

Thus did poor Emmeline comfort herself by voluntary self-accusation, rather than impute blame to him she worshipped.

After the agitation occasioned by Lord Arlingford's visit had subsided, the family-party at Charlton returned to their former melancholy composure. Day after day still passed, and no letter came; no intelligence reached them. Every ray of hope now vanished; all intercourse between Emmeline and the being on whom her existence hung, seemed now at an end for ever. Her father never alluded to the subject; but she had every reason to think that he still kept to his resolution of demanding an explanation; and

indeed their formal and total separation seemed now almost unavoidable. Even Pelham, her best friend, seemed to have forgotten her; and thus deserted, the few past months of her life, during which all the feelings of her heart had been roused, and a new existence had been opened to her, seemed a dream of delirium. All had vanished. Apparently also neglected by that gay world which so lately courted her with all its most intoxicating blandishments, the admired, flattered Lady Fitzhenry, had again sunk into Emmeline Benson, and was living in all the retired concealment of guilt, without one fault, one folly to be laid to her charge.

Perhaps some of her fashionable friends when they chanced to drive through

Grosvenor-street, and when their attention was attracted by the closed windows of Lord Fitzhenry's house, at that season of the year when every open London balcony is gay with dear-bought sooty flowers, might, as they cast up their eyes on the deserted habitation, wonder what had become of its inmates, and what might be the most like truth of the many stories which were for some days circulated about them.

But after those few days, the daily business of amusement, and some new tale of scandal, soon superseded that of the Fitzhenrys; their vacated places were soon filled up at those meetings of pleasure to which they had been invited; and *he* was allowed quietly to prosecute his journey on the Continent, and *she* to

drag on her melancholy existence within nine miles of all her former associates, unmolested and unthought of. Who then would sacrifice happiness or comfort to the opinion of the world? Often the sacrifice of a whole life to the idle talk of a day!

One evening, when the Benson family were as usual sitting together in mournful silence, which was only at times broken by some forced remark from Mrs. Benson, as she sat dismally at her work, her husband having had recourse to his usual amusement, the newspapers, the latter looking suddenly towards Emmeline, said: "At last I see the abominable west wind has changed, and has allowed vessels to get across the Channel: no less than four French mails are due.

Emmy, dear girl, cheer up," added he, patting her cheek as he spoke; "there is no saying what news these mails may bring, for I dreamt last night——"

Mr. Benson was here interrupted in his intended story by a loud ringing at the door-bell; he started up and hurried out of the room. No one spoke, but all had the same idea—all fancied it could only be Lord Fitzhenry. Mrs. Benson laid down her work, and moved towards the hall. Emmeline alone sat immoveable. Her father was at the house-door, and opened it before any servant could reach it. She heard the trampling of a horse on the threshold—heard a voice in brief communication with him. A footstep approached the room—she fixed her eyes wildly on the door, scarcely able

to breathe. But again she had to endure the torture of disappointment—Mr. Benson entered alone, with a letter in his hand, brought, he said, by a man on horseback, who had orders to deliver it with all speed. The letter was for Emmeline, and the direction was in Pelham's hand-writing. She hastily broke the seal, and while evey pulse in her heart and in her head throbbed, she read these words:

"You would have heard from us before, but Fitzhenry has been ill—indeed is so still. We are here at Paris delayed on our journey. If you could, (I need hardly add, if you would,) I should wish you to set off immediately, on receiving this, to join us. Trust me, I would urge

nothing that I was not certain was for your and your husband's *mutual* good. At Dover you will find a vessel ready to bring you over, and my own courier to accompany you, who will prevent all delays and difficulties. Lose no time. Fitzhenry has had a most violent and alarming fever; but to-day, I think, there is some decided amendment—the medical people now are sanguine. God bless you.

"G. PELHAM."

Emmeline held out the letter to her father, while her full heart relieved itself by tears; when he had read it, without looking at her, he said: "Well, how do you mean to act?"

"How!" said Emmeline, breathless with agitation, "why set off directly."

"I don't know that I shall agree to that," answered Mr. Benson, with the same forced *sang froid*. "In this business you are not fit to judge for yourself, and I must consider for you."

Emmeline grasped her father's arm, endeavouring to catch his averted eyes: "Dear father! I think you have never yet had reason to doubt my obedience to your will, so you must now forgive me for saying, that no power on earth shall prevent my going to my husband. My only chance for happiness in this world, duty, every thing, in short, calls me to him. Do not, I entreat, forbid me, for I could not obey you."

"But," rejoined Mr. Benson, rather impatiently, "it is not your husband that sends for you. Mr. Pelham does not even say that he knows of his writing to you; and I am sure he would make the very best of the matter, for he seems to be a kind, friendly sort of man."

"Indeed he is," answered Emmeline; "and indeed I can trust to him. He would not have written for me had he not been sure it was *his* wish. Dearest father, I must, I will set off directly; and do not let me go with the pain of your displeasure."

Mrs. Benson joined her arguments to Emmeline's entreaties, bringing in, with excusable artifice, something about the duty and devotion of a wife, till, at last,

Mr. Benson seemed somewhat moved; and a glance which he caught of Emmeline's face, crimsoned with agitation and animated with painful anxiety, completely overcoming his intended firmness, he opened his arms to his trembling daughter: "Well, well, you women always get the better, always make fools of us men. The truth is, I am heartily tired of your dismal face, Emmy, and of all this weeping and wailing—that is the truth of it; so e'en take your own way, so that we may be all happy again. But I can tell you, positively you shall not go alone, child; at all events, *I will* go with you to Dover."

"But directly, dear father—no delay—the happiness or misery of my life may

depend on an hour—now, this very night, let me set off."

"Oh! as for that, I am always for dispatch, you know. If a thing is to be done, let it be done directly, that is my saying. There is no fear of John Benson dawdling."

And the good-hearted old man, rubbing his hands, hurried out of the room to give the necessary orders.

In an instant, all was bustle in the house. Mr. Benson himself paced away to the stables to hasten the harnessing of the horses; and Emmeline, a few minutes before inanimate and almost lifeless, now, with a flushed cheek, restlessly paced the hall and drawing-room, impatient at every moment's delay. She hardly knew whether she had most cause

for dread or hope from the contents of Mr. Pelham's letter. Fitzhenry was ill —plainly very ill; and, as her father said, it was not even hinted that it was by his desire she had been summoned; but still she thought she could trust to that kind, considerate friend; and the idea, the delightful idea, that in a few days she would again behold Fitzhenry, got the better of every other thought.

While Emmeline was thus counting every second till the carriage came to the door, Mrs. Benson busied herself in those necessary preparations for the journey, which her pre-occupied daughter never thought of. At last, by midnight, all was ready; and followed by the blessings and good wishes of her mother,

Emmeline set off with her father for Dover.

"I shall come back to you, perhaps, the happiest of human beings," said she, as she returned Mrs. Benson's fond embrace—"perhaps———" She had not courage to finish the sentence.

"Foolish girl!" said her father, as he helped her into the carriage; "no more whimpering. Now shut the door; bid the man drive on: and you, Mrs. Benson, my good woman, do you go away to your bed. Pretty wild doings these! This comes of connecting oneself with quality!"

The horses set off; and the rapidity with which they went, the feeling that she was hurrying to the object of all her wishes, and the fresh air of a fine sum-

mer's night, all helped to compose and revive poor Emmeline; so that, at Dover, Mr. Benson, with a lightened heart, resigned her to the care of Mr. Pelham's courier, whom they found there waiting her orders. Her father offered himself to go on with her to Paris; but that she for many reasons declined; and at last he consented to return to Charlton. He first of all, however, went with her down to the beach, saw her safe into the boat that was to convey her to the vessel, and, from the pier, watched its white sails as long as he could, with his glass, distinguish his daughter on the deck, waving her many a farewell with his handkerchief. At last, his dear Emmy became a speck, and vanished. The good man, then, brushing away a tear

from his eye, and ejaculating to himself a benediction on his darling, returned alone to the inn, and resumed his journey homewards.

CHAPTER IV.

Mercy, dear Lord, saide he, what grace is this
That thou hast shewed to me, sinfull wight,
To send thine angell from her bowre of bliss
To comfort me in my distressed plight?
Angell, or goddess, doe I call thee right?
What service may I doe unto thee meete,
That hast from darkness me returned to light?

FAERY QUEENE, Canto 5.

WITH all superior characters, such as Emmeline's, the mind so supports the body, that, for the time, it is rather strengthened than exhausted by exertion. Although her health had been impaired, and her nerves much weakened, by all she had lately undergone—yet, fearless

of fatigue, she travelled on without stopping, and arrived in Paris on the evening of the third day from that on which she had left Charlton.

On entering the barriers, her heart almost ceased to beat; and when she drove into the court-yard of the hotel to which the courier directed the postilions, a death-like cold crept over her frame. But at the door, she saw Mr. Pelham; and the smile with which he welcomed her again gave her life.

"He is safe; he is out of danger;" he hastily said, as he ventured to receive in his arms Emmeline's almost inanimate form, and pressed her, as a brother would a beloved sister, to his heart.

"Will he see me?" said Emmeline, looking still doubtfully in Mr. Pelham's face.

"Soon, very soon," said he; "but you must compose yourself first; the least agitation must be spared him." And he led her up stairs to Fitzhenry's apartments.

"Did he send for me?" said Emmeline timidly, as soon as her agitations allowed her to speak.

"My dear Lady Fitzhenry," replied Pelham, "I never have deceived you, and will not do so now; Fitzhenry did *not* send for you; did not even know of my writing. At that time, in truth, I despaired of his life; but I know my friend well enough to be convinced, that had he had a moment's composure, he would have been glad to have had it in his power to demand and obtain your forgiveness. It has pleased Heaven to

give a more favourable issue to this illness than I then had dared to anticipate. Fitzhenry is now pronounced out of danger, but he is in a state of weakness that, of course, has necessarily precluded all conversation on that, or any other subject. Therefore your presence here is no way expected by him."

Poor Emmeline's countenance fell;—a thousand vague hopes and expectations were in an instant crushed!

Pelham observed her emotion, and added: "I cannot attempt to excuse my friend's conduct; a strange infatuation has blinded him, and, for a time, clouded his better nature; but I am much mistaken if that fatal madness is not entirely and for ever at an end."

All must know how hard it is to bear

the blank feeling of disappointment when we have (even unreasonably) raised our hopes as to some desired bliss. Emmeline had pictured to herself her husband changed—penitent—receiving her to his heart; and, when she learnt the real truth, she almost lost the sense of happiness at his safety, in the bitter feeling, that even though her rival's reign was over, still *she* had never been thought of by him. She covered her face with her hands, while tears of mortification slowly stole down her cheeks.

Meanwhile, the servants had unloaded the carriage; and, as she heard it driving out of the court-yard, Emmeline, in the humiliating pain of disappointed feelings, almost resolved in-

stantly to leave Paris, again return to her father, and not force herself upon one who evidently wished not for her.

With this idea, she suddenly rose from her seat. "I will see him once more," said she in a hurried manner: "could I not unseen follow you into his room? I will not speak to him—he shall not see or hear me—I will leave him directly, and for ever ——" she added; but in so low a voice that Pelham did not catch the words; and, attributing all her agitation to anxiety about her husband's safety, and thinking that nothing but beholding him would satisfy her as to his existence, he drew her arm within his, and led the way to Fitzhenry's bed-room.

On opening the door, the darkness

seemed so total, every window being closed, that Emmeline, satisfied she could not be observed, followed Mr. Pelham to the bed-side; the curtain was down, so that she could not see Fitzhenry's face, but merely heard him breathe; by degrees, as her eyes got used to the obscurity, and judging by his immovable stillness, that he had not observed their entrance, she ventured gently to put the curtain aside and look on him. But to the fond eye of love alone was he the same Fitzhenry from whom she had parted scarcely a month before. His eyes were closed; his cheek was sunk and colourless; his brown curly hair fell lank on his pale forehead, which was contracted with the expression of suffering.

The sight was too much for her, and totally overcame her recently-formed resolution of leaving him for ever. She sunk on her knees at his side; her hand fell on his, which lay apparently lifeless on the bed; and, in the agony of her feelings, careless of consequences, she covered with tears and with kisses, that hand which she had never before dared to touch; but which now felt not her fervent lips; was insensible to her burning tears, and lay passive within hers.

Emmeline remained fixed at the bedside of her husband. The former unhappiness of their connexion, his indifference and even apparent dislike, her own punctilious distance of manner toward him, all seemed now forgotten by her.

In trembling anxiety, she watched each heaving of his bosom, each movement of his languid limbs; and how her heart throbbed the first time his lips moved, and that she heard his voice! It was weak and hollow; but still it was that voice which thrilled to her inmost soul; he expressed a wish for something to moisten his parched mouth; Pelham brought the glass to Emmeline; her trembling hand was steadied when she held it to his lips, while she put her arm round him to support his head.

She now seemed his established sick nurse: what she should do when his amendment allowed him to know who it was that was attending upon him, never was talked of, indeed was never thought of by Emmeline. To be allowed to see

him constantly, to perform for him the offices of affection, was such happiness that she would not destroy it by venturing to look forward. She gave him all his medicines. Sometimes, unconscious what he did, he took hold of her hand, and held it long within his; but, exhausted apparently by his illness, he never opened his eyes, never enquired what he took, nor from whose hands he received it. The physicians, however, assured Emmeline, that this insensibility was merely the natural consequence of the violence of the fever through which he had struggled, that they hourly saw some amendment, and found increased strength of pulse.

On the second evening after her arrival, he had sunk into something more

like natural sleep than the state of stupor in which he had hitherto lain. Fearful of moving, and thereby of disturbing him, Pelham had taken hold of the first book he could reach, and was reading it by the light of the lamp in the sick room. Emmeline was sitting at the foot of the bed, with her eyes fixed on her husband's countenance, for it was serene and calm, and had more of its own natural expression than she had yet seen. At length, he moved, passed his hand over his eyes, which then rested on Emmeline, and endeavoured to raise himself. She saw that sensibility had returned; and not daring to advance towards him herself, she made sign to Mr. Pelham to come to him.

"Where am I?" exclaimed Fitzhenry. —"I have been very ill, Pelham, have I not? I have no recollection—indeed, my head is still confused. I could even now fancy," continued he, staring wildly on Emmeline, "that I see Lady Fitzhenry before me."

"Yes, dear Fitzhenry," replied his friend, "you have been ill—long very ill; but you are now pronounced to be quite convalescent, and a few more days will, I trust, restore you even to strength."

"But my head is so weak—you will laugh at me Pelham—but I repeat it—I could swear that at this moment I see Lady Fitzhenry quite plainly sitting at the end of my bed; but I suppose it is all weakness, and that such odd delu-

sions will go off—but how very strange such fancies are!"

"Would you wish it to be no fancy?" said Pelham calmly: "would you like your delirious vision to be realized?"

"Oh, Pelham, why do you talk in that way to me? you will only confuse my poor brain still more—you too well know how impossible it is."

"Do you still fancy you see her?" said Pelham.

"Still—still: it is her very countenance, her melancholy expression; and she looks at me now—I almost fancy I see her breathe and move—Oh! Pelham, for God's sake give me something to rouse me out of this miserably nervous state;" and Fitzhenry covered his eyes with both his hands.

"Fitzhenry," said Pelham, in a slow but tremulous voice, frightened at the possible effect of that which he was going to impart,—"what if I were to tell you that this is no sick dream—but that the figure before you, is in truth and reality Lady Fitzhenry, your Emmeline?"

Fitzhenry gave a violent start, and grasped Pelham's hand—"Good God! Lady Fitzhenry in reality, here!—Speak to her Pelham—I dare not, cannot."

Poor Emmeline, trembling with anxiety, had not courage to move or utter a single word, and during all this conversation had appeared the phantom her husband had taken her for.

"Fitzhenry!" said Pelham, "compose yourself; you have nothing to fear from

Lady Fitzhenry; affection alone brought her here—and you will at last be convinced, that far from being hated, you are loved as few can hope to be."

"Is it possible! do you not deceive me?" said Fitzhenry, eagerly, a faint smile playing on his lips as he turned towards Emmeline. But she still, doubting her happiness, remained immoveable.

"What, Emmeline!" said he, "cannot you forgive me?"

At that name, at those words, all fear forsook her; he held out to her his feeble arms, and she rushed to his heart; his head fell on her bosom; and, overcome with his feelings, he wept like a child. In a few minutes, he recovered himself, and gazing in her face, their eyes met.

Oh! who can describe the happiness of that moment? Emmeline read affection in those eyes which she had never before dared to encounter; and when Fitzhenry again pressed her to his heart, and, half timidly, kissed her burning cheek,—at that minute she almost could have wished to breathe her last, so perfect was her bliss.

Such emotion, however, was not good for the invalid; and Pelham forced Emmeline for a time to leave the room, till she had recovered the power to endure her happiness with composure. When she returned, she again took her station, in silence, by his bed-side. Fitzhenry seized her hand, held it in both of his, but spoke not. One minute, one look, however, had sufficed to open their hearts

to each other; no explanation was necessary; indeed, Emmeline would have been fearful of breaking the dream of felicity in which she now lived, by one word recalling the past.

Fitzhenry now daily seemed to gain strength. Occasionally, a short cough, which the physicians pronounced to be nervous, tormented him by disturbing his rest; but his eyes looked less languid. At times, some colour returned to his cheeks; and, supported by cushions, he could now sit up on a couch. And what a delight it was to Emmeline to wait upon him, to watch and prevent his wishes; to smooth his pillow, and receive in return a smile of kindness and gratitude!

Sometimes, however, a cloud would

darken her present happiness. If Fitzhenry was more than usually silent or thoughtful, (and he now often fell into long fits of deep abstraction,) then her jealous fancy pictured to her that his thoughts and affections were wandering back to Lady Florence. When he talked of England, of his wish to return home, again she took alarm; and, in spite of herself, interpreted his anxiety on the subject into the desire again to be in the same country with her rival—perhaps, indeed, again to return to her chains.

Lady Florence had never yet been in any way alluded to—Fitzhenry seemed to shun the subject as much as Emmeline; so that she hardly knew her fate, hardly knew by how strong, or how

feeble a tenure she held her present felicity.

One day, however, he suddenly seemed to summon courage for some sort of explanation between them. Emmeline had, as usual, been arranging his sofa. Her hand still lingered on the pillow which supported him; and, after gazing on it a minute, he seized it, and looking attentively on her wedding-ring—

"Emmeline," said he, "give me back that ring, you shall wear it no more; it was one *de mauvaise augure*, and shall in future live on my hand for a memento, like Prince Cheri's. I will marry you over again with *this*."

And, with a half melancholy smile, he drew from his finger a small fretted gold

ring, which appeared to have been intended for a woman. At the same time, apparently repeating some words to himself, he put in its place that which he had taken off Emmeline's hand. "Give me a prayer-book," said he; "and look for the marriage ceremony, for I have forgotten what I then promised."

When he got the book, he read it to himself for some time in silence.

"Good God!" he at length exclaimed, "did I pronounce these words? did I make those vows? villain that I was! Emmeline, can you forgive the past?"

"Oh! do not talk of the past," she eagerly exclaimed; "I am too happy now to wish to think of it."

"But what an awful account I shall have to give," added he, again casting

his eyes on the book recording his solemn engagement with God.

"Dearest Fitzhenry!" said Emmeline, sinking on her knees beside him, "a God of mercy will forgive all."

"Pray to him for me," said he, in a low tone; "I fear I cannot. I never prayed!"

Emmeline shuddered, she seized his hand: "Oh! Fitzhenry, talk not so wildly; God is now calling you to him, shrink not from him."

Fitzhenry pressed her hand; again took the prayer-book, and with a tremulous voice read these words:

"I, Ernest, take thee, Emmeline, to my wedded wife, to love and to cherish; and forsaking all other, keep myself only unto thee as long as we both

shall live; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

The last words died on his lips, and closing his eyes, he sank back, seemingly both affected and exhausted. Emmeline was too much moved to speak: she pressed to her lips and to her heart, that hand now a second time given her—but in how different a manner!

From that day, Emmeline's prayer-book was his constant companion. She saw his mind was deeply affected, and left the strong impression to work its own effect.

CHAPTER VI.

———————Whilst I remember
Thee, and thy virtues, I cannot forget
My blemishes in them; and so still think of
The wrong I did myself.

WINTER'S TALE.

A FEW days after the scene recorded in the last chapter, when Fitzhenry appeared better than he had yet done since his illness, and that he had even some of his own natural and playful cheerfulness, "Lady Fitzhenry," said he, with a smile, "how long is it since you have

liked me—*loved* me?" added he faintly, colouring.

Emmeline coloured too. "Oh! I can't remember," said she; "I tried to hate you, for I felt it my duty to myself to do so; but somehow, from the very first, I could not."

"How strange!" continued Fitzhenry; "I should not have thought I could have been so very blind and stupid. Our sex is pretty clear-sighted where our vanity is concerned; but I suppose I was so conscious that I deserved to be hated by you, that I convinced myself I was so; and every, even the slightest occurrence, confirmed me more and more in this opinion. Perhaps too I felt (at first at least) that it was an ease to my conscience to think you disliked me, trying to persuade myself in that manner that

we were quits. Pelham, when he came to Arlingford, soon saw how things were, and took me to task—he had known me long; known all my history."

Fitzhenry paused: at length, resuming in a lower, graver tone—"Emmeline! my wife!" said he, "I must ease my mind by confessing all to you. I have loved—madly loved—it was a delirium, an intoxication, an infatuation—but on my honour, before God!" and he fervently clasped his hands together—"before God, I swear it is over. My esteem, my admiration, all is now, indeed has long been, yours."

Fitzhenry had left out the word love; and Emmeline missed it. She turned away her face from her husband, but not so quick as to prevent his observing the change in her countenance; and, drawing

her towards him, he (smiling) added, "And my love too." Still Emmeline kept her eyes averted. "Listen to my story," said Fitzhenry, "and then you will believe me. I need not tell you in what a pretty humour I was married. Good God! when I recollect the state of mind in which I was—that dreadful day—I really now wonder how I got through it all as well as I did.

"I resolved on civil indifference towards you; and, at the beginning, it was easy enough to keep to my resolution, although from the first, your conduct astonished, and consequently interested me. I expected reproaches, sullenness, or childish repinings, and complaint, but found sweetness, good sense, and delicacy. Emmeline! I could swear that you never in your life

suffered as I did that morning after our marriage, when I had to encounter you in the breakfast-room. You held out your hand to me—there was a smile on your face, that went to my heart as a dagger. That day however over, my thoughts and feelings returned into their former channel, and I was so entirely engrossed by them, that my remorse died away. I persuaded myself I behaved vastly well to you, and that you thoroughly deserved that fate which you had brought on yourself. The civil indifference which I determined to maintain in my conduct towards you, soon, however, became difficult to pursue. There was sometimes an archness in your smiles—in your look and manner—an appearance of reading my thoughts, and laughing at the awkward situation

in which I had placed myself, that piqued me, and made me almost in awe of you. I was often, too, I am ashamed to say it, provoked with you for your patient good humour, for not seeming to feel my abominable conduct towards you more. But, at others, I found *you* whom I had resolved to disregard—to dislike—to my surprise, I found you (forgive the seeming impertinence of the expression) a most intelligent, conversible companion; and more than once I caught myself owning how agreeable you were.

"But, although such thoughts at times occupied me, still my affections were so strongly engaged—my whole soul so enthralled by mad passion, that they were but passing thoughts; the impression, as yet, was not deep. I then left home for some time, and returned to you with all

my old feelings strengthened. I had renewed all my vows of constancy, of fidelity to another, perfectly regardless of the solemn, sacred engagement, into which I had entered with you—(profligate, unprincipled villain that I was!) Wishing to avoid, in future, the possibility of a *téte-à-téte* with you, I had invited several friends to meet me at Arlingford, on my return there. I thought that by that means, we might avoid even the common intimacy produced by living under the same roof, and meeting daily, as I flattered myself that you would be lost in the mass. But that plan failed. I heard your name, your praises, from every one, and every where. Your voice always attracted my attention, and the very resolution to slight, and dislike you, made me constantly occupied about you.

"Among the party then at Arlingford, you remember, was Pelham. He had come to England, on purpose to see me, and to make your acquaintance. Knowing my former history, he had, as a true friend, rejoiced at my marriage, for I had basely concealed from him the circumstances that had attended it, fearing his strict integrity; but, when living with us, it was impossible for him long to remain ignorant of our real situation. I was forced to confess all to him; and he did not spare me. He persecuted me eternally with your perfections. I allowed that you possessed sense, acquirements, gentleness, most pleasing manners; but I insisted upon your total want of feeling, on your having no heart; and I brought, as proofs of my assertions, your apparent perfect contentment under circumstances

that would have roused the anger, if not broken the heart, of any woman who had a particle of sensibility. Even on that point he would not give way; and, one evening, while the whole party were busily employed in dancing, and you were engaged at the piano-forte, we were discussing the subject pretty warmly, (something that had passed having given rise to it,) and Pelham was maintaining you were *even* much *attached* to *me;* when a break in the music, a sudden burst of voices, and your name often repeated, made me turn round, and I beheld you in apparent gaiety of heart, waltzing joyously by yourself—'Look there,' said I to Pelham, (with the true selfish pride and impertinence of man,) 'look at the sentimental girl, who is dying for love of me.'

"Pelham stared at you in astonishment. He was silenced; for, at that moment, I am sure he read you as little aright as myself. As for me, I at first looked at you in scorn; but other feelings soon succeeded. You were, at that minute, perfectly beautiful; there was a look of wild enjoyment, a brilliancy in your complexion, a grace in your person, that fixed my attention, and, in spite of myself, forced my admiration. I had never seen any one, (any *but one*,) waltz so well: at that moment, I almost thought I had never seen any one so lovely. The truth was, I seldom before had ever looked at you attentively, for I feared to encounter your eyes, and somehow they always instantly seemed to know when mine were directed towards you.

"For an instant, I was lost in admiration, as I followed your light form round the room; so I suppose was Pelham, for our argument seemed totally forgotten by us both. Suddenly you came up to me, and seized my arm. Had the marble statue left its pedestal, and done the same, I could scarcely have started more violently beneath its grasp. I was altogether so thrown off my guard, that I hardly knew what to say or do. Your conduct surprised, (I must own,) even disgusted me; I thought it was no subject for a *joke*, and that there was a want of delicacy in thus braving me. You may remember I was made to waltz with you."

Emmeline's deep crimson showed she remembered it well.

Fitzhenry pressed her hand, which he

held still more closely, and continued—"It seemed to me to be all a concerted plan to torment me; my momentary trance of admiration was dispelled, and was succeeded by feelings very opposite. You then appeared to me to endeavour, by old and hacknied arts of coquetry, to attract my attention: you fell almost entirely into my arms; you laid your head on my shoulder, and complained of faintness. I cannot describe the strange mixture of feelings which at that moment took possession of me—for though, even then I fancied I disliked you, yet, I verily believe regret and disappointment were uppermost on discovering (as I thought I then did) the common-place, artful nature of your character. To extricate myself from you was, however, my first object; and, under

pretext of gallant attention, I directly left the room to procure a glass of water.

"In truth, your indisposition was evidently not feigned, for you were as pale as death; but in my vexation I would not own that even to myself. I was in in a devil of a humour all that evening. The next day Moore made that foolish piece of work about the brooch, (which circumstance, by the bye, I still don't comprehend); however, I know well that I wrote you some *impertinence*. What, I don't recollect, and I suspect I had better not remember. It seemed to me that you and Moore were in a league to plague and provoke me; and I hated you both most cordially. I felt it was impossible to go on in this way; and, to put an end to the whole thing, I pretended sudden and violent zeal for the welfare of my

country, and announced my intention to go early to town, to attend parliament. But it was not politics which took me there; nor did I, as I believe I basely let you imagine, pass my days and nights in the House of Commons.

"But my conscience was perfectly at rest, for your conduct then seemed to sanction mine. You plunged madly into dissipation, and for days together, although living under the same roof, we often did not meet. I believe I again gave a sigh when I thought how I had been mistaken in your character, for I had fancied there was, at least, nothing of frivolity in it, and had frequently been forced to confess to myself, that had I been free, and to choose one who would have suited me as a wife, (barring your supposed want of feeling

and tenderness of nature,) I should have chosen you. On the whole, however, I rejoiced at your apparent levity of disposition. I felt as if I thus regained my liberty, and that your follies excused my faults. It seemed to me that it was by mutual consent that we then each went our own way. But mine was no longer one of pleasantness. I felt—and yet the feeling was pain—I felt I did not love as I had done. I saw her as she was, wanting all that beauty of innocence, of virtue, which you so eminently possessed; but, still infatuated, I sought her society although the charm was gone.

"We had not been long in town, however, before a strange madness came over me. I hardly know how, or when it began. You had general success—

were universally admired; but I fancied that *Pelham in particular admired you;* and, when once that thought had taken possession of my mind, every trifling circumstance gave it additional certainty; till one night, at Almacks, I surprised you together in such earnest conversation, and in such evident emotion, that I had no longer a doubt left on the subject. Although I had voluntarily rejected your affections, and repulsed you from me, yet I could not bear that another should awaken feelings which I had tried to persuade myself you did not possess. I really believe I was vain and ridiculous enough to want you to love me, when I had no intention of returning the partiality, and certainly made no attempt to inspire it. I had sought

Pelham that evening, having something of consequence to say to him; but when I saw you, I totally forgot my errand. I looked at you stedfastly, to try and read your heart. You blushed deeply. How can I own my folly, my perverseness, my inconsistency! I gazed on you in jealousy! for I then saw and acknowledged your attractions: I saw that your smiles, your gaiety, your bloom was gone. I saw that some secret sorrow had changed the character of your countenance, had altered the whole tone of your mind, and of your manners. But, every way totally deceived, I never once dreamt I was the cause of that sorrow.

"At Easter, I would not go to Arlingford, for if I had, there could have been no reason why you, why Pelham, should

not have accompanied me, and I did not feel that I could have stood the trial. So I went to Mostyn Hall; but, on my honour, it was more to avoid you, and Pelham, than to seek her; for all was there changed. Suspicion and discontent now poisoned our intercourse; and when I called to mind your gentleness, your feminine *home* perfections, she fell still lower in the comparison. I was then summoned home on account of poor Reynolds's illness; she ridiculed my feelings for him; but, for the first time, I disregarded her raillery, I resisted her allurements, and set off directly for Arlingford. You may imagine what was the effect produced on my mind, when on opening the door of the invalid's room, I beheld you kneeling by the bed of my old servant. I had no idea you were at

Arlingford. I had left you apparently engrossed by the world and its dissipation. Indeed, according to the suspicions of my jealous fancy, by still more powerful attractions, and could hardly believe my senses. Oh! how my heart at that minute smote me for my hasty and seemingly unjust judgment of you.

"Poor Reynolds, you may remember, joined our hands; an unaccountable fear, shyness, I know not what, came over me. I had not courage to retain your hand when you withdrew it from mine; I felt you were a being too pure, too good for me; and I allowed you to fly from me. Reynolds talked to me much about you—told me long stories about your goodness, your affection for me—about having found you gazing on

my picture, and I know not what; but I fancied his mind began to wander; that I could not trust to what he said; in short, I would not be convinced, although I wished it. But still his exhortations, the awfulness of the scene, and my own accusing conscience, all combined to work on my feelings; and I resolved, the first moment I could, to leave him to go to you, seek an explanation, and implore your forgiveness.

"When I reached your door for that purpose, my heart beat with various contending feelings. I hardly knew what I said; I longed to fall at your feet, to ask you to forgive and love me. A word, a look of kindness on your part would then have fixed our fate—one smile, and I should have caught you to my heart—

been yours for ever. But I found you cold, distant, and for the first time, since I had known you, even irritated and repulsive. There were traces of tears on your face, which you endeavoured to hide from me; your whole manner betrayed emotion and feelings, which you wished to conceal. I saw then, as I thought, but too plainly, how it was—all combined to deceive me. Mrs. Osterley's thoughtless hints came to my mind, and confirmed me in my suppositions. I fancied that the case was hopeless. My pride then closed both my heart, and lips, and I would not confess to you feelings which I was convinced you could not now return.

"As I was leaving you, by accident your hair—one of these beautiful long

ringlets—got entangled on the button of my coat sleeve. Had you been forced to touch a serpent, you could not have recoiled from it with more horror than you did from me. Do you remember all that Lady Fitzhenry? and pray how do you explain your conduct?" said he, smiling.

"In the whole of your supposed love-story, for 'Pelham' read 'Ernest,'" answered Emmeline, in a low voice, as she hid her face on his shoulder, "and all will be fully explained."

"What a pity it was, that we were both so proud or so stupid!" continued Fitzhenry, sighing deeply as he gazed on her in tenderness: "I was both, and left you in anger; although, I confess, I had little right to take the matter

up in that manner. The next day, provoked with you, with myself, miserable every way, I would not attempt to detain you at Arlingford, though I ardently wished it; I only read impatience to return to Pelham in your resolved departure, and would not for the world have allowed you to think I wished you to remain. I remember, however, that as you drove from the door, you cast back one look—one melancholy look, which shot as a ray of light through my heart; (for I was watching you from my room;) had I been at the door, I believe, even then I should have endeavoured to stop you; but, before I had time to decide, you drove off. I then persuaded myself that the look of regret which I had fancied I had seen on your

countenance was mere fancy; I took your thus leaving me as declared war on your part; and, when I joined you in town, I determined that my conduct should be such as (fool, idiot, that I was!) I thought befitting my pride and honour—fine sounding words, which I put in the place of selfishness and passion.

"In consequence of this resolution, I totally neglected you; we ceased almost entirely to speak to each other when we did chance to meet, and I returned in desperation to your rival. I endeavoured in her society to forget every thing, to banish from my mind you Emmeline, my friend, and all the dreams of happiness—of domestic happiness which now eternally haunted me. But in vain! the fascination of her society

was gone—we were both changed; it was impossible to recall feelings which truth had destroyed. She could not again blind me; suspicion made her *exigeante*—her thraldom became insupportable; my feelings, my temper, both were irritated beyond my control; my mind was sick, as my body now is."

For a minute or two, Fitzhenry hid his face in his hands, and seemed lost in no pleasing recollections; at length, after a deep-drawn sigh, (whether of regret or repentance Emmeline could not decide,) he continued:

"I now come to the last and the worst part of my story. I would fain forget it all; but Emmeline, you shall know the very worst; shall be aware what a hot-headed fool you have to deal

with, and then you must still love me if you can. I think I need hardly ask, if you remember a certain Saturday night at the opera. By accident, I happened to know, that you had, that night, given away your box; and, therefore, feeling secure you would not be there, had agreed to accompany Lady Florence; for, abominably as I had behaved, you must do me the justice to allow, I never so far insulted you as openly before you to be seen with your rival; how much certain selfish feelings and awkward uncomfortable sensations of shame influenced me, I will not pretend to say. Well, I joined Lady Florence. After I had been with her a few minutes, she carelessly told me, she believed she had seen you. I directly looked round to

the box which she said she had observed you enter; but, not being able to distinguish you, I was satisfied that she must have been mistaken. Presuming on her former power, she then spoke of you. I could not bear to hear your name in her mouth; I felt it almost an insult to myself. She spoke too of you with a sort of ridicule and levity that disgusted me; she hinted at the attachment between you and Pelham, and seemed to enjoy the pain she saw she was inflicting. Although a smile was on her lips, yet her eyes flashed fire—the fire of jealousy and revenge. This, in the present state of my feelings, was not to be endured. I dared not speak; I knew too well also the violence of her temper; it was not the moment for a

scene, and I said not a word; but still, there I remained, as if spell-bound. My mind was, however, busily at work, and I formed many resolutions for extricating myself, from my present miserable situation. You then rose to my imagination, gay, blooming, gentle, artless, as you were when I first took you to Arlingford; when I had sworn to love and protect you; and had then basely repulsed, and abandoned to your hard fate. My conscience smote me sorely. I felt how greatly I had injured you; that, young and inexperienced as you were, I had, by my cruelty and neglect, driven you into danger. I thought, perhaps, you still had not wandered so far, but that your affections might yet be recalled. On my honour, Emmeline, infatuated

as I was, I had then no doubt of your innocence, your purity, your virtue. Nor could I even bring myself to suspect Pelham's honour. That you loved each other, I did not doubt; but I respected you both too much to think I had been injured by you. I resolved, in short, that, on that very night, we should open our hearts to each other; that all should be explained between us. I determined to propose to you, Emmeline, to leave town with me—to leave England directly, and by mutual forgiveness, to make up for the past, and begin a new life of penitence—I hoped finally of happiness. Lost in these thoughts, I sat unconscious of what was passing around me, till the falling of the curtain roused me from my trance. Lady Florence then seized my

arm. She saw she had displeased me; feared she had gone too far, and would not quit her hold. When we reached the lobby, I saw you and Pelham. I hurried her down stairs in the opposite direction; but she had seen you too, and I could distinguish a smile of triumph on her countenance.

"What happened afterwards you know. The two carriages had got entangled, for your coachman, Emmeline, was fighting your battle for you, and contending with Lady Florence Mostyn's. In the confusion I caught a glimpse of you, at the moment when she had fallen back into my arms. I heard the coarse jokes of the mob of footmen as your carriage drove off. I was nearly frantic. Florence had been slightly hurt, was still

frightened, and nervous. I could not be so brutal as to leave her in that state. I went home with her. I meant calmly, kindly, to speak to her; to represent the misery of our intercourse—in short, to open my heart to her. But the instant she suspected my meaning—overpowered by her passions, her fury knew no bounds, nor her envenomed malice and jealousy towards you. My blood fired—a violent scene ensued. I left her in anger——and fully resolved for ever."

Fitzhenry had latterly spoken so quick, that he paused for a minute, as if exhausted and overcome by his feelings; but Emmeline was too much interested and agitated by the narration to make any comment; and, after a moment's total silence between them, he con-

tinued, although in a still more perturbed manner.

"I hurried home—I was in that feverish state of mind, when to think, to pause, is impossible. I felt I must instantly throw myself at your feet, that our fate must be that minute determined. I meant to propose to you to set off for Dover that very night. I had ceased to love *her;* but my mind was torn with contending feelings, my brain was on fire. As soon as I reached home, I rushed up stairs—I heard Pelham's voice in the drawing-room—the door was not closed, my ear caught these words, 'Honour—you may trust me'—(and you will allow those are awkward words for a husband to overhear addressed to his wife.) I was determined to be satisfied at once—to

have all doubts removed. I burst into the room; and my worst suspicions were confirmed. Pelham had hold of your hand; you were close to him; your head rested on him—you were violently agitated—both started on seeing me—you were both evidently discomposed, and thrown off your guard. Was it strange that I converted all this into evidences of guilt? I had just enough command over myself not to speak. You attempted some excuse for the situation in which I found you. Your effrontery surprised and shocked me. At that minute, I totally forgot your wrongs and my own conduct, and I only considered myself as basely betrayed and injured. Pelham then followed you to the door of your own room; he said something to you in a low voice—

again he took your hand. All that before my face was too much. I wonder how I contained the rage that burned within me. I felt that I could not then discuss the matter with him, and I left the house like a madman. I paced up and down the street, and watched for Pelham's departure before I returned home; giving way to all the delirium of passion, and distracted by all the misery of doubt. My first impulse was to write to him, imperiously to demand an explanation of his conduct, and satisfaction for my injured honour. Heavens! to think that I sought an opportunity to deprive of life Pelham, my best, my tried, my devoted friend! I passed the night writing letter after letter to you both, and destroying them as fast as I wrote.

By degrees, however, my passion cooled; I sometimes thought, and fondly hoped, I might be mistaken. When I recalled to mind my friend's strict principles of virtue and integrity—principles that had so often made me blush for my faults—I could not think that what I suspected was possible, strong as appearances were against you both. Your virtues too, Emmeline, your look of artless innocence, haunted me. How could I reconcile your present supposed conduct with all those perfections which I had so admired in you?

"Hours passed on, daylight returned. The servants began to stir about the house. I heard footsteps in the room above—in your room, Lady Fitzhenry. Every minute I expected some message

from you, some note, some explanation in short; and kept my letter to Pelham unsealed, still hoping I might have been in error, and that something would undeceive me. I soon, however, heard preparations for your departure; your leaving my house thus, without even taking leave of me, I interpreted into a decided resolution on your part that a final, formal separation should take place between us. You had said you were going to Charlton. I sometimes hardly believed that you were really going there, and, in frantic moments, I suspected the worst. But at others, when my own conduct forced itself on my mind, when I reflected on your wrongs, I then thought that, exasperated probably by my ill treatment, you were leaving my roof for

ever, determined, perhaps, that the law should dissolve an union which had been but a source of misery to you, in order that you might legally unite yourself to the man you loved. Again, had not pride restrained me, I would have sought that explanation which I longed for, and then all would soon have been understood between us; had our eyes but met, we must, at that moment, have read each other's hearts; but in proud, sullen silence, I awaited some opening from you.

"None came; at length your carriage drove up to the door; I heard your footsteps on the stairs; you stopped at my door; my heart beat to suffocation; I thought, nay, I felt almost sure that you were coming to me; my hand was actually on the lock to open it; just then I

heard one of the servants speaking to you, you passed on—I heard the carriage-door shut, and you drove off. I felt that we had parted for ever; and, when too late, I regretted the blessing I had thrown away.

"My Emmeline, I am not *now* ashamed to own to you, that I wept in bitterness of heart.

" The instant you were gone, in desperation I sealed and directed my abominable letter to Pelham. I ordered post-horses directly, desiring that the carriage should follow me to his lodgings. On arriving there, I learnt he was gone out of town. This confirmed all to me; I tore open my letter, said we could never again meet but in *one* way, and for *one* purpose. That I was going instantly to Arlingford, that he

might there follow me, and give me the satisfaction I demanded, unless indeed he was already far off with another.

"How perverse is human nature! Man's nature at least. On my arrival at Arlingford, I missed you whom I had always before shunned, at every turn. I missed the gentle being who had so long, so patiently submitted to my most impertinent vagaries. I missed my poor victim! Every room, every inanimate object recalled her who would have given to all such a charm! I spent hours in your room, Emmeline, in useless, tormenting regrets. In that room which I had hitherto avoided with such care! Alternately condemning myself and you, I felt that I had lost every thing—I was completely miserable!"

Greatly exhausted by this narration, during which Fitzhenry had often been interrupted by his cough, he leant back on the couch. The door, at that moment gently opened, and Pelham appeared. On observing the very visible signs of emotion on both his friends countenances, he was again hastily retreating, when Fitzhenry called to him—"No, come in, Pelham; what we were talking about need be no secret from you, for indeed you are principally concerned. I was telling Emmeline all my history. In other words, confessing all my faults; and as you are, God knows, well acquainted with both, I wish you would relieve me, by bringing the narrative to a conclusion; I have owned to her all my strange fears and fancies, my

suspicions even of you. Can you, Pelham, ever forgive and forget them? can you forgive the ravings of a madman, for such they now appear to me to have been."

"Don't be too humble in your apologies to me," said Pelham, smiling—"for I am not sure how far I am myself innocent, if it is guilt to esteem, to admire, to———" Pelham stopped, for a minute. "In short," added he—"I had more than half a mind to punish you, Fitzhenry, for your extreme stupidity; and endeavour myself to win the pearl of great price which you rejected; but, from the first, I had, luckily for me, penetration sufficient to discover that the attempt would be perfectly hopeless."

Pelham said this in the light tone

of pleasantry; but, as he spoke, his eyes glanced mournfully on Emmeline, and a slight tinge of red momentarily suffused his sallow cheek. But his emotion totally escaped Emmeline's observation, whose eyes and attention were entirely fixed on her husband, fearful of losing a word, or look.

Fitzhenry, however, saw all; his eye moistened as he held out his hand to his friend, and warmly pressed his within it. "Well Pelham, now you must take up our history from my sudden departure for Arlingford, where you found me; and do not spare me; I deserve thoroughly the worst you may be tempted to say of me."

"Don't be afraid, my good friend," replied Pelham; "I am, you know, not

apt to compliment you.—Well, Lady Fitzhenry, to go back to that fatal Saturday night: Fitzhenry had appeared in so strange a mood when we then parted, so agitated, so unlike himself, that I had determined to be in Grosvenor-street early next morning; but the arrival of a courier from the continent with dispatches of importance, obliged me directly to repair to our foreign minister's: he was, I found, gone to his villa at Putney; thither I followed him, and was there detained so long on business, which could not be deferred, that I did not get back to town till late in the afternoon. I drove straight to Grosvenor-street, and learnt, to my surprise, that both of you had left London—but not together. I feared something disagreeable had pass-

ed, and when I reached my own house, I found Fitzhenry's letter, which confirmed my apprehensions. I declare, that at first I thought he was mad—and could scarcely guess what he meant, what he could allude to. Although obliged in four and twenty hours to leave England, yet I could not go without seeing him, without endeavouring at least to clear up all this sad misunderstanding; and I lost no time in repairing to Arlingford. It is fortunate that I am by nature blest with a very calm temperament, otherwise this meeting might possibly have ended in our running each other through the body. But Fitzhenry and I had been too long real friends for any *unfounded* misunderstanding long to exist between us.

"I at length succeeded in convincing him how perfectly absurd and unjust his suspicions were, as far as I was myself concerned. But there, my powers of persuasion ended: he would listen to nothing I could say about you, Lady Fitzhenry: you hated him, he said; if it was not me whom you preferred, it was some one else. You were quite changed towards him—he could hardly blame you, but things had now gone too far to allow of any hope of reconciliation. You had left his house in anger, just anger—gone to your father's; had probably told him all, intending no doubt to insist on a formal separation—on a divorce. Perhaps legal proceedings were already commenced against him. And whatever he might suffer, he could, and

would, only acquiesce in whatever you chose to dictate.

" Fitzhenry then repeated to me again and again, all his *proofs* of your indifference and dislike,—all which were only proofs of his own blind infatuation. In short, poor fellow," added Mr. Pelham, smiling—" he talked a great deal of nonsense. However, at last, by setting up my proofs in opposition to his, I succeeded in extorting from him an agreement, that he would go with me directly to Charlton. I was first to see you alone, and he promised that he would then be guided by my judgment as to his own conduct. The carriage which was to convey us to you was actually at the door, but, unfortunately, Fitzhenry, who was in a state of diseased

anxiety, and restlessness of mind, insisted on waiting for the arrival of the post; it brought no letter from you, (which was what he had secretly hoped for,) but one from his father, that immediately destroyed all I had been labouring to accomplish. Gossip had been busy with you and your husband; indeed had even brought in my name. The scene which took place at the opera, your both abruptly leaving town—these circumstances, put together, and enlarged upon, had been formed into a regular story of rupture, elopement, duel, and the Lord knows what, till at last it found its way into the newspapers, I was told; and thus reached Lord Arlingford, who, much alarmed at the report, wrote directly to his son, entreating him to con-

sider well what he was about; to break off immediately a connexion which was now become so public, and consequently so disgraceful, and endeavour to be reconciled to his wife.

"So far all was well; but unfortunately the arguments he used were the last to influence your husband's noble mind, for they were those of interest. Knowing Lord Arlingford as well as he did, at any other time Fitzhenry would have treated such a hint with the contempt it deserved; but he was then no way himself—he tore his father's letter into a thousand pieces, and, with a bitter smile, while his face was ghastly pale said, 'he is right, quite right; it is my *interest* to be reconciled to Lady Fitzhenry—no power on earth shall make

me seek her forgiveness—the first overtures must come from herself. Even you surely would not have me go as a beggar, and sue and humble myself to her father: what an honourable appearance would repentance have just now! No, Pelham, I will not do it; and any attempt to persuade me to such a step, I warn you, will be perfectly vain.'

"During our friend's own story," continued Pelham, "I think, Lady Fitzhenry, he has probably let you a little into the secret of his character; and, therefore, I may venture to say, that pride is his besetting sin. Had I but hinted this at that time, I suppose he would have knocked me down; but we have him in our power now; and who would believe, seeing him, as he

now is, so meek, so humble, so contrite, and subdued, what a perfect devil he was then!"

"Come, come, Pelham," said Fitzhenry, while his pale face was slightly coloured: "you are a little exceeding the liberty I gave—tell the story fairly, but no comments. Let Lady Fitzhenry find out my faults herself; she will do that quite soon enough without your assistance; indeed, God knows she has had full opportunity already ——"

"Lady Fitzhenry has but one fault to find," interrupted Emmeline, as she looked half reproachfully in her husband's face: "it is that you persist in calling her by that cruel formal name."

"Bad old habits, my Emmeline," he replied smiling; "which, if they offend

you, shall be conquered; but I *could* explain why I never *now* pronounce that name without feelings very, very different from those of coldness or dislike; do I not by it claim you as my own? But I want to have done with my history. So go on, Pelham, only remember no annotations and reflections."

"I was ignorant of what had passed between Fitzhenry and Lady Florence," continued Pelham, almost tempted to smile at his friend's sickly petulance: "he had never named her. Had I known of their rupture, I should immediately have entreated you, Lady Fitzhenry, to have come, or at least to have written to him; but not aware of that connexion being at an end, I could not advise a step, which I felt you could hardly take,

and which I thought, indeed, would do little good if all was to go on as it had done for some months past. Fitzhenry was seemingly wretched; but so he had long been. I had undeceived him as far as was possible for me to do with regard to your feelings towards him, and I certainly felt it was for him to seek you, and to implore your forgiveness.

"Hopeless, therefore, of bringing about a reconciliation between you at that moment, I informed him of my necessary and immediate departure for the continent, and proposed his accompanying me; I thought, by that means, the fatal connexion which seemed the bar to your mutual happiness might be broken; and, knowing well your heart, and certain that affection would, with you, get

the better of every other feeling, I trusted that time and circumstances would restore you to each other. Fitzhenry directly with eagerness caught at the idea of leaving England: 'it is the best thing for us all,' said he: 'and it will break to Florence what at present I cannot say—cannot write to her.'

"On our way to town, however, being still unwilling to give up all hope, and still thinking it was incumbent on Fitzhenry to make the first advances to you, I formed a little plan to decoy your husband to Charlton on our road to Dover, and I pleased myself with thinking that I might, by this very allowable artifice, be the means of bringing about your mutual happiness; but something betrayed my scheme; and, as soon as he

suspected my intention, he was thrown into a state of violence and irritation of temper, in which I had never before seen him, and which really alarmed me. It was Mr. Benson's presence which he dreaded, I believe: he could have laid his pride, (that stumbling-block of his,) at your feet Lady Fitzhenry, but he could not humble himself before others."

"Indeed, Emmeline," said Fitzhenry, interrupting him, "again Pelham barely does me justice; it was not pride that made me dread encountering you. On the contrary, it was shame, fear, humility, and all those perfectly contrary feelings."

"Poh! poh! don't let him take you in with all that pretty sounding humbug," continued Pelham, laughing. "How-

ever, the real truth was, that he was as unlike his real self then, as, I am sorry to say, he is in many respects now. As we proceeded, I became more and more convinced that he was far from well. During the journey, I made little progress with my headstrong companion in my attempts to bring him to reason, and at last his answers became so strange and incoherent, that I was really alarmed; and, on our arrival here, I immediately sent for a physician. He found him, as I had suspected, in a high fever; and I am convinced his illness (brought on probably by agitation) had attacked his brain even before it showed itself visibly in his health; as at Arlingford, he certainly was in a state of irritation perfectly unnatural to him. Fortunately,

the letters I here found enabled me to delay my further journey for a short time, in order to devote myself to him.

"You now know all," continued Pelham; "and whatever my future lot in life may be, it will be one gratifying recollection that I was the means of uniting two beings so formed for each other, and whom I love so entirely."

Mr. Pelham seized Emmeline's hand as he uttered these words, and pressed it to his lips. "Reward my friend for his services to me and to yourself, Emmeline," said Fitzhenry, "by letting him kiss that varying cheek of yours. Can I give a stronger proof that my delirious fever has quite left me?"

Pelham waited not for further leave; he pressed her to his heart, and, as he

printed a fond kiss on her forehead, "God bless you, Emmeline,—God bless and protect you both!" he cried, with emotion; "and in your future hours of happiness remember me." Then resuming a more cheerful tone, he added: "And now, my dear friends, that my mind is at ease about you both, (for I do not now apprehend a relapse of *any* sort,) and that I can leave you, Fitzhenry, in the care of so good a nurse, I must repair to my post, and set off to-morrow morning for Vienna, in case any longer delay should bring me to disgrace—as politics have little respect for the feelings of friendship."

CHAPTER VII.

"In vain may art the couch of sickness tend,
Or friendship sigh, or sympathy implore,
Or love, all sanguine, o'er the sufferer bend:
The mortal sinks,—and every hope is o'er!
These brooding thoughts in useless pangs expire;
More soothing sounds let struggling nature hear,
Catch from religion's shrine an holier fire,
And wake to duty, from her trance severe."

After Mr. Pelham's departure, Fitzhenry became very impatient to return to England. He was better certainly, and had regained some degree of strength; for now, leaning on Emmeline's arm, he

was able to walk about his apartment; but still he did not seem to recover as rapidly as he should. A degree of varying fever still hung about him; his cough, which the French physician still called nervous, at times exhausted him much, and he had a look of languor quite unnatural to him; his cheek remained hollow, his eyes looked sunk.

Paris, meanwhile, grew insufferably hot; his anxiety to leave it, and his desire for home became so strong—partaking of the feverish longing of illness—that in the hope that the short sea voyage might prove rather beneficial to him than the contrary, it was at last decided that they should set out for Arlingford. They went down the Seine by water, and then hired a vessel to take them to Pool, which

was within only twelve miles of their own home. The voyage seemed to do Fitzhenry good, the sea air to refresh him; and, on his near approach to Arlingford, his spirits and animation seemed to return; and Emmeline gazed with delight on the colour in his cheeks, and the sparkling gladness of his eyes; and oh! how eloquent was their language to her doating heart! what volumes did they tell in one single glance!

Perhaps many would not understand the emotion which made both their hearts beat even to pain, when they entered the well-known scenes of Arlingford;—but, again I repeat it, I address myself only to those who have known the deep feeling of tried affection, the wild enchantment of love. Emmeline fancied

she saw sympathetic joy in every countenance, and as she returned the congratulatory salutations of the country people, (who, smiling, took off their hats as the carriage passed,) she could scarcely restrain her tears. At how many a turn in the road, or well-remembered path or ride, recalling moments and feelings of past unhappiness, did they almost involuntarily look at each other; and how often did Fitzhenry clasp Emmeline's hand in his, and entreat her again and again to forgive him!

Thus buoyant with joy and gratitude, they at last drove up to the door of their own home. Fitzhenry's spirits had been so much beyond his bodily strength, that they had quite exhausted him; so that when he left the carriage, it was with

difficulty he reached the drawing-room. As the servants all eagerly pressed forward to give him their assistance, "Poor Reynolds!" he exclaimed, tears starting into his eyes, "I wish I had his arm to lean on now, for how happy he would have been!"

When he was assisted to the couch in the drawing-room, he looked round the apartment for several minutes in silence, and when the door had closed on the attendants, he held out his arms to Emmeline. They could neither speak—but they did not need words to express their feelings; both knew what was passing in the mind of the other, and Emmeline secretly thanked the giver of all good for her present happiness.

We poor mortals do well to catch at each passing moment of joy, and feed on them while ours; for alas! how soon do they fade away! and how wretched the condition of those who, weak in faith, see not the bounty of God in every blessing, and cannot "lift the adoring eye e'en to the storm that wrecks them," relying on the wisdom and mercy of his unsearchable providence.

Fitzhenry had a restless night of cough and fever; and although Emmeline attributed both to the fatigue and agitation of the preceding day, yet she sent off an express for an eminent physician residing at Winchester; and on his arrival, with a beating heart, led him into her husband's apartment. Doctor Harring-

ton, who had formerly often seen Fitzhenry, appeared much struck with the alteration in his appearance: he questioned him minutely as to his cough, and other symptoms of his complaint; then, drawing out his watch, he repeatedly counted his pulse. Emmeline, who in breathless anxiety watched every look and word, could not help taking fright at his manner; and her alarm was increased, when, on pretence of writing a prescription, he followed her into the adjoining room, and addressed her with—"Pray, Lady Fitzhenry, do I remember right, was not the late Lady Arlingford consumptive?"

Poor Emmeline's blood froze in her veins, and her pale lips betrayed the terror his question had conveyed.

"I beg you will not be alarmed," he added, in a sententious tone, observing her emotion; "Lord Fitzhenry is young; has always, I believe, lived most temperately. At present, I apprehend no immediate danger; but we must be careful. These hereditary complaints are sometimes obstinate, and difficult to deal with."

And thus he went on for some time with the *sang froid* which some of his profession, perhaps naturally, acquire; fancying he could in that manner reassure his trembling auditor. But she scarcely heard him. The sudden transition from joy and the overflowings of her grateful heart, to the dreadful apprehensions which now took possession of her mind, was too violent to be endured.

Almost unconscious what she did, she received from Doctor Harrington's hand his written prescription; and, with an altered countenance, returned to her husband. The flushed crimson of his cheek, the bright, feverish sparkling of his eyes, now made her shudder; and she hid her face at the back of the arm-chair in which he was sitting, fearing she might betray herself.

"Well, Emmeline," said he at last, "what news from Doctor Harrington? he looked prodigiously pompous about me; but I hope he will give me something to stop my cough, and make me sleep: in fact, that is all I now require to be well. But it is wearisome. Last night I never closed my eyes: however, I believe that was the effect of happi-

ness, at being once more at Arlingford, and with you. What does the sapient doctor recommend? Let me look at what he has written. This is all Greek and Hebrew to me," said he, in a light tone, as he returned the paper to Emmeline; "indeed, I hope, for my learning's credit, even more unintelligible—but, Emmeline, are you not well? how pale you look! I think you require a little doctoring as well as myself. You have worn yourself out by nursing me; I will not let you do so any more. Last night you did not leave my room for hours, I know, for I watched you, and at last was forced to feign sleep, in order that you might go and get some yourself. But this shall not be any longer. I really do not now want my

servant, or, indeed, any attendance. We will have that little couch-bed moved into my room for you; and no soporific which the doctor can recommend, will make me sleep half so well, as knowing you have that rest which I am sure you need even more than myself."

Emmeline hid her face on the cushion on which his head was lying—she could not speak.

"What, Emmeline!" he continued, "will you not agree to my proposal? Have I said any thing to displease you? Foolish girl!" and he drew away her hands, that were hiding her face.

On beholding it, he looked at her a moment in silence. His countenance changed. He took her hand in his,

raised his eyes to heaven, but said nothing.

The apprehensions which Dr. Harrington's report, guarded as it was, had raised in Emmeline's mind, made her anxious for further advice; and yet she feared to alarm Fitzhenry by proposing it: but at her first word, he understood her, and calmly said—"Do whatever you like, whatever will ease *your* mind." And she wrote immediately to Doctor Baillie.

During the days that passed till his arrival, she made an effort to throw back from her heart the miserable anxiety that was oppressing it, and to pursue her usual occupations. Many a burning tear stole down her cheek in silence and solitude; but she always met her husband with a smile; and if he ever saw

traces of her feelings on her countenance, he forbore noticing them.

With sensations of apprehension not to be described, Emmeline, at last, on the day he had appointed, saw Baillie drive up to the door. She felt that her fate hung on his opinion. Dr. Harrington had come to meet him; and after a short private conversation between the two medical men, they proceeded, with Emmeline, into their patient's room. Fitzhenry welcomed them with cheerfulness; talked for some time of the news of the day, and on indifferent subjects, to Baillie; and then turning to Emmeline, who had been unequal to the exertion of a single word during their conversation,—

"Lady Fitzhenry," said he, "you must leave me to say my catechism to

Dr. Baillie alone. I want too to make serious complaints of you," added he, gaily; "of your obstinacy and disobedience; of the way in which you sit up all night, destroying your health and bloom."

Baillie made some attempt at a compliment; but his kind heart felt for the anguish he saw painted on her countenance; and, unable to answer him, Emmeline in silence left the room.

Those who have felt their very existence depend on one word, may imagine how she passed the cruel, anxious, long half-hour that now elapsed. At length, the door of her room slowly opened, and Fitzhenry himself, leaning on his stick, came in alone. His face was flushed; and though he forced a smile, on enter-

ing, Emmeline plainly read in it an expression that was like a death-knell to her heart and hopes. She flew up to him, and helped him to a couch. After a moment's pause, drawing her towards him—

"Emmeline," said he; "dearest! we have suffered too much, and too long, from concealing our feelings from each other, for me to have courage to undertake to keep another secret from you, although it is one which I know will pain you." Emmeline's pallid face showed she was but too well prepared for what he was going to say. "I have for some time suspected my real situation," added he; "but I was determined to learn the truth; and I knew Baillie's sensible upright honesty would not, at my serious request, conceal it from me. I re-

quired of him to give me his candid opinion as to my health."

Fitzhenry paused; Emmeline clung to him, as if to stifle what more he had to say; but he continued, though in a faltering voice.

"I had hoped it might have been otherwise; I had hoped, for your sake, that we might have been allowed to live for some little time at least, happily together; but that God whom you have taught me to worship and submit to, no doubt judges wisely; and, we must, I fear, look to our approaching, final separation."

At these words, poor Emmeline could no longer command herself; an agonized scream escaped from her bursting heart, as she sank on the floor before him.

"My Emmeline! my dear Emmeline!" he cried, endeavouring to raise her in his feeble arms—"Spare me—I entreat you—I cannot bear to see you suffer thus—have pity on me."

"I will, I will," she almost convulsively exclaimed, "but this is too—too much for me."

"You mistake me, Emmeline," said he, endeavouring to calm the agony he had caused. "There may be hope yet; Baillie is you know famous for seeing every thing *en noir*—he was very plain-spoken with me, for I forced him to be so; but recollect, Emmeline," added he, endeavouring to cheer his voice, "even Baillie may be mistaken, and while there is life there is hope: before winter, we are to go to a warmer climate; you will pray to

heaven for me, and your prayers, dearest, will perhaps be heard. They have already once restored us to each other; they may do so again. I should not have said all this to you, I believe, but it is so necessary to me now to conceal nothing from you, that I could not have borne the load alone; but, for God's sake, dear Emmeline, compose yourself, and for my sake, bear up."

And for his sake, she did exert herself; for of what is the female character not capable, when nerved by strong affection? All was settled for their leaving England the beginning of October, when they were to repair to Lisbon; till then, it was thought that the climate of Hampshire would be better for Fitzhenry than that of Portugal. The season was unusually

fine ; and, sometimes, when well enough to wander a little way from the house, the balmy air, and cheering sounds and sights of a fine autumn, seemed to revive him ; and, if ever he prolonged his walk one yard further than he had done on the preceding day—if he had ever appeared rather more cheerful—his voice stronger—Emmeline, to whose young heart happiness was so necessary, then again, for the moment, gave way to delightful anticipations. Had she ventured to look back, and trace from week to week the rapid progress of the fatal disease, that was fast hurrying its victim to the grave, she could not have indulged even such momentary gleams of hope, but then also, she could not have per-

formed her hard task with the courage she did.

Fitzhenry was generally calm, and even cheerful; and he sometimes talked of what they would do on their return to Arlingford; and projected alterations and improvements in the place; but all such plans for the future, usually ended in a sigh, and were listened to in mournful silence by his wretched wife; and although he thus forced himself to appear interested in worldly affairs, yet, by the turn his conversation now commonly took, it was plain to perceive that the whole tone of his mind was completely changed; and when Emmeline proposed reading to him, he always selected such books as led to reflection, to God, and to a future world.

Their wedding-day, the 19th of August, was the last on which he left the house; his exertions to appear cheerful on that day, had been so much beyond his strength, that they had exhausted him. The next, he could not leave his room. A fortnight more, and he could scarcely raise himself from his couch. The end of September came, and the preparations for their departure for Lisbon continued to be made, no one having the heart to countermand them, although it was very evident to all, that he would never quit his present home, but for that, where he would be for ever at rest. As his bodily strength failed, his mind seemed to gain fresh vigour, and to soar above the cares and sufferings of this transitory life. Resignation was an easier

task to him, than to the wretched being who, strong in youth and health, was doomed to remain in that world from which she saw her every joy fast departing. But she never complained; she never wept; at least, her tears were ever concealed from him for whom they flowed. With a steady voice, she read to him of the peace, the bliss of heaven—of forgiveness to penitent sinners; and, when she saw her husband's eyes raised to that heaven in humble submission to its decrees, she clasped her hands beside him in silence; and if a distinct prayer escaped from her meek heart, it was to implore that she might be released with him from this world of suffering.

One night, after she had read to him that beautiful Essay of Miss Bowdler's,

on the Advantages of Sickness: "I am sure, Emmeline," said he, in a faint voice, "it will ever be a comfort and joy to you to think, that through your means I have been saved from destruction. When I think what I was only a short twelvemonth ago, I bless God for the change, although brought about by such cruel means. Oh! if I could but live my life over again," he added vehemently: "if I could but feel once more the strength and health of mind and body, of which I made so bad a use; if I could but see you, my own Emmy, the blooming light-hearted girl you were when I married you, when I so cruelly scorned and neglected you, how superlatively happy I should be. But all is over now; the past cannot be recalled,

and there is no future for me in this world; and yet, convinced as I am of this, do you know that even now I sometimes, during the long, tedious, sleepless hours of night, still foolishly indulge in vain dreams of happiness, and picture to myself our future life here; I see you admired by every one—the charm, the ornament of my home, (for proud, worldly ideas will still cling to me.) I fancy I see that innocent beaming smile I once saw—I hear that joyous laugh I used to hear till my unkindness silenced it; in fancy, we ride together, we *waltz* together," said he, forcing a faint smile: "and this perfect earthly bliss, which providence offered me, I rejected and spurned—spurned you, who would have made my home a hea-

ven to me, and not one word of reproach have I heard from you. Oh, Emmeline, if you were less kind to me, I believe I should suffer less bitterly; that smile, that look of love cuts me to the very soul. There is only one comfort of which you have not been deprived by me, that of an approving conscience, and the hope of happiness beyond the grave; for in heaven we shall be again united, and by your means. I trust I am not too presumptuous, but the entire resignation with which I look to approaching death, though now possessed of every blessing this world can give, and the hope with which I anticipate meeting you, my guardian angel, in the next, gives me a strong feeling of confidence, that my past errors are blotted out."

Fitzhenry's voice became choked, he sank back and closed his eyes, and for some time they both remained silent.

"I have talked too much," he at length said; "I am rather exhausted, and at times I feel more low without knowing why. I think I shall sleep, so good night; God bless you, my Emmeline:" and he kissed her pale tear-bedewed cheek, then turned his head away, and for about an hour all was quiet. Fitzhenry never moved, and Emmeline trusted he was getting some refreshing rest; he had coughed less that day, his pulse had appeared to her to be quieter; and as she clasped her hands in humble supplication, a faint gleam of hope even then shot through her sorrowful heart.

"Oh! God of mercy, if possible, spare

him!" she ejaculated with such fervency, that her lips, unconsciously to herself, uttered the sounds. Fearful that she might have disturbed him, she went softly to the couch on which he was lying. He directly held out to her his feeble hand: "I am not asleep," said he, in a hollow altered tone, that made her shudder; "I cannot sleep. I heard your prayer, my Emmeline, but it cannot be; the decree is past; and, while yet I can, I have a favour to ask of you, though I am sure, beforehand, you will grant it. In my writing-desk you will find a letter—when I am gone—send it to—to Florence. Do not start, dearest,—it is my wish, my last request that you will read it—I have purposely left it open. But I would like to die in peace with all—even with her.

A time may come when, like me, she may regret the past; and then it will be a comfort to her to know that I forgave her the evil she was the cause of to us both—and also it relieves my heart to ask forgiveness of her for what injury I have done, what pain I may have inflicted upon her. As for you, my own Emmeline, I know I should only grieve you if I were to ask for your forgiveness. I am sure I have it," said he, as he imprinted a fond kiss on her quivering lips: "Heaven reward you with its best blessings! When you see Pelham again, you will for my sake be kind to him. Poor Pelham! he loved me most truly!—he loves you too, Emmeline."

Fitzhenry paused, and fixed his languid, glazing eyes on her face; he seem-

ed as if anxious to say more, but he only sighed deeply; and, after a few minutes' silence, taking from under the pillow Emmeline's prayer-book, which he had always kept since that day on which he had renewed to her his marriage vow: "And now, Emmeline," said he, "read to me that prayer for the sick."

In silence she complied, for she had taught her breaking heart to bear such trials: she had learnt to stifle her sobs, to swallow her bitter tears.

"Blessings on thee, my love," he said, when she had finished; "your voice soothes me; your prayers do me so much good. But there is still another I would have you read—that for the dying."

Emmeline looked at him aghast—his countenance had within the last hour

visibly changed—death was upon it—her blood chilled in her veins; but, making a desperate effort, with a tremulous voice, broken by convulsive sobs, she began to read. When she came to these words, "Look graciously on thy servant, O Lord! give him unfeigned repentance for the errors of his past life," Fitzhenry's hand pressed Emmeline's more closely with a sort of nervous, convulsive grasp. She continued to read—his hand stiffened—grew cold———all was over——.

A loud shriek brought the attendants from the adjoining room: they raised poor Emmeline's lifeless form from the ground; with difficulty unloosed her hand from that of her husband, and carried her to her bed.

When consciousness, after a lapse of some days, at length returned, she saw her father and mother hanging over her—But Fitzhenry, her adored Fitzhenry, was for ever shrouded in the close, cold habitation of death!

CHAPTER VIII.

Yet still, thou mourner, o'er the death-bed stand,
Still honour, as thou canst, the breathless clay,
Still bring thy flowers, and strew with pious hand,
And weep behind the bier in slow array;
And raise the stone, inscribe the record kind,
And all thy heart's vain tenderness reveal,
And guard the dust, in awful hope resigned,
And bow to heaven, that formed thee thus to feel.

Extract from a Letter from the Rev. E. Pelham, to Sir George Pelham, minister at Vienna.

——— "You ask me if I can tell you any thing of Lady Fitzhenry. Being some little time ago on a visit to a friend at Poole, and anxious to be able to give

you some more satisfactory account than mere common report, I resolved to drive over one Sunday, and attend divine service at the parish church of Arlingford, as I was told that she was generally there to be seen; and, hearing she lived perfectly retired, I did not like to intrude upon her with the offer of a visit.

"You know it is now nearly a twelvemonth since the death of poor Fitzhenry. The pew belonging to the Arlingford family, the pulpit, and communion table, are all still covered with black, and with the escutcheons and arms of the Fitzhenrys. When the church-bell had done ringing, Lady Fitzhenry, with her father and mother, came into the gallery. A deep black veil at first hid her face and nearly her whole person; but the church

growing very hot, she at length put it aside.

"Had I not previously known who it was, I certainly should not have recognised her. There is no trace of the laughing eyes, of the dimpled cheek, of the fresh gay young countenance, which I was acquainted with. Perhaps it was partly owing to contrast and to the quantity of black by which she was surrounded, but I thought I had never seen so pale a face. Still, though she has already lost much of the fresh beauty of youth, there is a charm in her faded sadness—an air of sentiment over her whole person, that more than compensates. Her hair was parted back on her marble-white forehead; and the only thing about her that was not black, was a gold chain,

to which was hung a small watch. I am thus particular, for I know you wish for particulars—and I certainly never before paid such attention to the minutiæ of a woman's dress.

"During the service, Lady Fitzhenry appeared engrossed by it as one whose heart's home is in heaven. When it was ended, all seemed respectfully to wait to let her pass; the village children eagerly watching for an opportunity to catch her eye in order to make their little obeisances, in the hope of a smile or kind word from her in return. I too might then have spoken to her, but a deep feeling of respect for her sorrows restrained me. I feared the sight of me might recall past days, and I did not like to intrude upon her.

"When all were gone, I still loitered in the church, and the clergyman and I at last were left alone. Seeing me examining the Fitzhenry arms with interest, he came up to me; and, after some usual civilities had passed, I asked him whether Lord Fitzhenry was buried in the church.

"'Yes!' he replied, pointing to a marble slab; 'beneath that stone is the family vault. It is now about a year since I read over it the funeral service: and many such sad duties have I performed, many melancholy scenes of death have I been witness to; but never, I think, will the impression of that day be effaced from my memory. I remember it was unusually fine for the season, the bright sun forming such a striking contrast

with the scene. It seemed to be a gratification to Lord Arlingford's feelings to pay every possible outward mark of respect to his son, and in every way to testify his deep affliction for his loss; and, with this idea, he desired that no expense might be spared at his funeral. I don't think that would have been the way in which I should have indulged my grief,' added the respectable old pastor; 'but we show our feelings differently; and certainly nothing could be more impressive than the sight of the long funeral procession, and the waving of the black banners and plumes, when moving slowly down the avenue that leads from the house to the village. The whole parish, even the county for many miles round attended; for Lord

Fitzhenry was much and justly beloved—and many too of course came for the mere show. Of all this costly dismal pageant, what struck me with the strongest feelings of melancholy was, the hearse, drawn by Lord Fitzhenry's own beautiful horses, which by his father's orders had been trained to a slow pace for the purpose; but, although pains had been taken to break them into their mournful duty, yet, excited and fretted I suppose by the crowd around them, and the trappings with which they were covered, it was with difficulty they could be restrained; and when, at last, they were stopped at the gate of the churchyard, they proudly pawed the ground, and tossed their heads, as in the days when they drew their master in all the

pride of youth and health, totally unconscious of the last sad office they were then performing for him. Lord Arlingford and Mr. Benson both attended, and were much affected at the ceremony, particularly the latter.

" ' Late in the evening, I was,' continued my narrator—' roused from no agreeable reverie, by being told that Lord Arlingford's carriage was driving through the village towards the church, and that one of the servants had come to beg that the door of it might be opened without delay; I immediately hurried thither. It was a bright moonlight night, and I saw Mr. and Mrs. Benson, who had already left the carriage, help out of it an almost lifeless figure; they supported her along—for, as you may guess it was poor Lady Fitzhenry. It seems, that nothing could

divert her from the idea of visiting the vault before it was again closed, and at last the desire became so strong, that they thought it best to comply with her wishes. Her hysteric screams, when she threw herself on the coffin, still ring in my ears; and it was with difficulty they tore her away from it. Twice, as if agony of mind had given her more than usual strength, of body, she broke from them. I really feared for her reason, under the influence of such wild despair, and at length, by force, we carried her back to the carriage. By Mrs. Benson's desire, I accompanied them to the house: she wished to try the effects of my prayers and exhortations on the poor sufferer. When she was laid on her couch, and had been given some composing medicine, I went

to her. It seemed as if all was then over with her in this world. Not a tear fell from her fixed eyes. 'He is gone—quite gone—I shall never see him again—never—never,' she repeated, apparently quite unconscious of her words, and with a horrible composure of voice, although there was wildness in her looks; for she appeared as if gazing on some invisible form. I knelt by her, I read, I said all that I thought was most likely to rouse her from her stupor of grief, and move her feelings; and at last, after one or two convulsive heavings of her bosom, tears came to her relief. She fell sobbing into her mother's arms; and I left that excellent mother to give her all the comfort she was then capable of receiving, that of sympathy and affection.'

"The kind-hearted old man here stopped, much overcome with his recollections.

"'Lady Fitzhenry has, I believe, resided here ever since the death of her husband?' I said, as soon as I saw he had sufficiently recovered himself. 'Yes,' he replied: 'by agreement, and the wording of the deed, which, at the time of Lord and Lady Fitzhenry's marriage, saved this estate from falling into the hands of Lord Arlingford's creditors, (it not being, like the rest of the property, entailed,) it became hers in the event of their having no children.' 'Does she do much good here?' I enquired: 'has she taken to the only employment left for the unhappy?' 'Oh! she is the friend and hope of all the poor of the neigh-

bourhood,' rejoined the good pastor with fervency: 'at first, indeed, she was so absorbed by her grief, that she seemed to heed nothing which was passing around her, and I have seen her mechanically bestow charity to any one who chanced to cross her path; but her good mother gradually brought her to make it the occupation and interest of her life. Alas! I fear she has now no other. She is indefatigable in her exertions to do good; and may the happiness she bestows on others be at length repaid back on herself, and at least bring her peace and comfort, if not enjoyment! I understand she is in general quite calm, and even, at times, cheerful; she never, in the most distant manner, alludes to her loss, or to the past year of her life, and hastily turns off all conversation that

can possibly lead to any circumstance connected with it; even with her parents, since the very first, she has maintained this same reserve. It seems as if her husband's memory was buried within her own heart, and that she felt the grave had shut too close over such an adored being for its sacredness ever to be disturbed.' I further learnt from my companion, that Mr. Benson has given up all share both in his mercantile concerns and in the banking-house; that his spirits and health seem to be both much broken; that he has lost all his bustling activity, and that he has just purchased a small place in the neighbourhood of Arlingford, intending there to pass the remainder of his days.'

"By this time, we had reached the door of the parsonage; its owner invited

me in, but I had already loitered much, and could delay my departure no longer. Finding that I could return to my place of destination by crossing Arlingford Park, I gave my name at the lodge, and being admitted, although not without difficulty, I drove as near the house as I could venture. The hatchment darkened the windows of the principal room—many of the others were closed. How different the whole place looked from what it did only a few months back, when I met you there at the time of the large shooting party which Fitzhenry had collected! Poor fellow! I used to abuse him then for his strange unaccountable conduct and coldness towards his pretty, interesting little wife; but I believe others had worked upon him and done mischief there. The place seemed

kept in good order as formerly; but all was silent, and had a look of desertion. I did not see a living creature, except some horses at grass, which I recognized to be Fitzhenry's favourite hunters. They eagerly pricked up their ears when I past, and threw back their long-neglected manes, as if a carriage was now an unusual sight; but when I had driven by, they quietly returned to their food.

"I travelled on many miles before I could get poor Lady Fitzhenry out of my head; pondering too with some compunction on a silly report to which I had carelessly given credence. The said report concerned her and you; for you must know, George, that the thoughtless, gossiping world, judging by its own unfeeling self, even while

Lady Fitzhenry is still shaded by her weeds, and you are closely fixed at your political post at Vienna, have already married you to each other.

" Remember, I am not so indiscreet as to ask how far this story comes home to yourself. That you admired Lady Fitzhenry was certainly very evident to my observation; but how far that admiration may lead you in forming wishes for the future, I can't pretend to say. Indeed, I almost fear the account I have now been giving, may destroy, or at least throw the gloom of doubt over some flattering vision of connubial bliss. For, (I may be mistaken,) but if I can judge of woman's countenance, and by it of woman's constancy, I should say, the first could never beam with joy again,

and that her every affection is for ever buried in the grave of her husband.

"Time will prove whether I am right; for your sake, I hope I am not."

THE END.

ERRATA TO VOL. II.

Page 5, *for* her heart sunk, *read* sank.
Ib. for then when fearful of betraying herself she at others, &c. *read* at others, fearful of betraying herself, she suddenly, &c.
Page 51, *after* beneath the scrutiny, *omit* of her rival.
Page 66, *after* drive up, *omit* their vehicles.
Page 86, *after* out of the carriage, *read* she desired, &c.
Page 104, *for* Mr. Benson, read Mrs. Benson.

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